

MISCELLANEOUS
ESSAYS,

V I Z.

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|---|---|
| I. Of Company and Conversation. | VII. Of Religion. |
| II. Of Solitariness and Retirement. | VIII. Of Kings, Princes, and the Education of a Prince. |
| III. Of Nobility. | IX. Of Greatness of Mind. |
| IV. Of Contentment. | X. Of the Education of Children. |
| V. Of Women. | XI. Of Law. |
| VI. Of the Knowledge of God, and against Atheism. | XII. Of Man. |
| | XIII. Of Old Age. |

W I T H

The Life and Conversion of *St. Mary Magdalen*, and some Reflections upon the Conversion of the good Thief; also, the Life and Conversion of *St. Paul*.

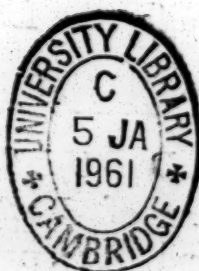
By Sir *RICHARD BULSTRODE*, Kt.
Envoy at the Court of *Brussels*, from KING
Charles II. and KING *James II.*

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To the Right Honourable

C H A R L E S

EARL OF HALIFAX,

First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, one of the Lords of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy-Council, and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, &c.

My LORD,



THE Obligations
I have received
from your Lord-
ship for many
Years past, and the Continu-
ance of them to this Time,

A 2

do

DEDICATION.

do justly call for a Publick Acknowledgment, the first Opportunity I had to make it.

Having nothing of my own worth Presenting to Your LORDSHIP, I have, with Your Permission, dedicated some ESSAYS of my Father's to Your Lordship's Perusal.

I know how delicate a Taste Your Lordship has; that you have adorned your Mind both with Univerfity and Polite Learning; fo that were I not entirely fatisfied the Thoughts in them are not common, (and were they not my Father's, I should

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should say) that they are writ in the smooth Stile of a Courtier, with the Spirit and Air of a Gentleman, and with the Strength of a Man of Letters, I shou'd not have presum'd to have inscrib'd Your LORDSHIP'S Name before them.

How he was qualified to write these ESSAYS, the Preface mentions ; I shall only add, that during the Time of his Foreign Embassy, which lasted about Thirty Years, he laid out his Hours between Books, Men of the most polite Parts, and Affairs of the greatest Moment.

He

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He had the Pleasure of near Twenty Years Retirement before his Death, (which was at an Hundred and One) to recollect his Observations of Men and Things, and put them in the Dress in which Your LORDSHIP sees them.

There are some of them indeed that seem not to have pass'd his last Hand, which therefore are not so correct as they would have been, had he liv'd to have finish'd them. But when I consider, that the first Draughts of a *Raphael*, *Titian*, or *Reuben*, are preserved with great Care, tho' not finish'd,

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finish'd, I thought it best to let them pass as they are.

The many great Services Your LORDSHIP has done the Publick, have been expressed by so many, that it will be hard to avoid Repetition.

However, for a Nobleman, at the Head of Affairs at Court, to move with a great Regard to the Liberty and Property of the Subject, steady to the Reform'd Religion in the worst of Times, that advances not Prerogative beyond its Legal Bounds, that has the Good of the Nation at Heart, and that acts with
great

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great Sincerity, are Virtues
that can never be sufficiently
admir'd by all true *Eng-*
lishmen, and particularly by,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most Faithful, and

Most Obedient Servant,

WHIT. BULSTRODE.

T H E



THE
PREFACE.



Think it necessary to give some Account of the Author of the following Essays, and likewise of the Essays themselves ; the rather, because being Posthumous Works, the Genuineness of them might be otherwise doubted.

As for the Author, *Sir Richard Bulstrode*, he was the Son of *Edward Bulstrode* of the *Inner-Temple*, Esq; whose Reports are extant ; he came abroad into the World well stock'd with University Learning ; was bred at the *Inner-Temple*, call'd to the Bar, and practis'd as a Barrister, till the Civil Wars breaking out, put a
a Stop

Stop to the Current of the Law; and being then a young Man, and of an active Spirit, betook himself to the Army, and was of the Royal Side; where he behaved himself so well, that in a little time he was made Adjutant-General to the Army of King *Charles* the First. After the Return of the Royal Family, he had a Place at Court; sometime after he was appointed to be at the Court of *Brussels*, as Resident from King *Charles* the Second; on whose Death he was made Envoy by King *James* the Second to the same Court, his whole Ministry there being about thirty Years; during which Time he held Correspondence with most of the Courts of *Christendom* (as I find by his Letters made up into Annals, which I have by me.)

When his Royal Master retir'd to *France*, he went after him, and submitted to his Fortune, and lived there in Retirement about twenty Years;

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Years; during which Time he had Opportunity to compose the following Essays, which were the Result of his own Experience.

He had been a diligent Observer of Mankind, thro' a long Series of Time, having lived to an Hundred and one; had the Experience of Courts, the Conversation of Men of the first Quality, Generals, and Men of Polite Learning: And having had great Variety of Fortune himself, was best able to inform Mankind what is proper to be done in those several Parts of Life, in which he had been exercised.

He looked back upon Life, after many Years enjoying it, with a truer View, than Men usually do forward; for we look through a magnifying Glass at Things to come, and think them much bigger, and more excellent than in Truth we find them. the Prospect of *Canaan* from Mount *Nebo*, was more ravishing even to *Moses*, than the Enjoyment of it

a 2

was

was afterwards to the *Israelites*, or would have been to himself. *Solomon* could not have spoke so feelingly of the Vanity of the Pleasures of this Life, had he not taken a full Draught of them. The Freedom of the Author's Conversation, in his younger Years, (being a Man of a warm Temper, a great deal of Wit and Generosity) having kept what we call the best Company, gave him an Opportunity of looking back on the Miscarriages, which young Gentlemen are subject to, with useful Reflections and Remarks, and of speaking more justly of those Errors, than Closet Moralists usually do.

The Author would have sent me the following Essays, to have published in his Life Time, had not the War between *England* and *France* hinder'd it; but dying before that ended, he gave directions to his Lady to send them to me by the first Op-

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Opportunity; which she accordingly did, being all of his own Hand Writing.

So much for the Author.

As to the Essays themselves;

That of Company and Conversation, shews him to have read *I, Essay of Company & Conversation.* Man-kind very thoroughly.

The Caution of chusing ones Company, when to speak, and when not, when to break a Jest, and when not, is very fit for all young Gentlemen to know; his short, but smart Reflections on obscene Discourses, is a Proof of his Knowledge of the Government of the Tongue.

He Inveighs against the Sin of scoffing at Religion and prophane Swearing, with great Sharpness and a moving Sorrow. When a good Man hears his Friend traduc'd, he defends him if he has Opportunity, or is in Pain for want of it: Much more should every Christ'an be concerned, when he hears that Name

prophaned, which ought not to be mentioned without Reverence,

Nor does Detraction and Flattery escape a just Censure, tho' he lived and dy'd in a Court.

His Rules of Conversation, with Superiors, Equals and Inferiors, are well weighed and consider'd. As most Men are free and open at Meals, the Account he gives of his Witty Master King *Charles* the Second, at his private Suppers, with some select Persons, Men of Wit, is very entertaining.

One general Rule he lays down, that should go through all the Parts of Conversation, and that is Integrity, which is a Virtue too seldom practised. He avoids the Pedantry and Moroseness of severe *Cynicks*; and tho' he highly commends pleasant Conversation, Wit, Musick, and diverting Tales; yet he wisely cautions against Picquant Jest, which often breed Quarrels; and in all these Freedoms,

Freedoms, has let nothing slip from him, that is contrary to the Rules of good *Ethicks*.

Mirth thus guarded with Innocence, makes the Cup of Life go down pleasantly, and leaves no Stain behind it, to wound the Conscience. He has truly said, that some Persons and Cases are privileg'd from Jest. As Men's Deformity, Meanness of Intellectuals, Poverty, &c. Which puts me in Mind of a Gentleman, whose Wit lay only in ridiculing others; and having a poor Man that work'd for him, (whose Shape was not deformed) would be often telling him he would give him five Pounds to sit for his Picture. The Man thought 'twas in Derision, would never be brought to it, but gave him this sharp Answer, *That he would give him five Pounds to laugh at a poor Man, but would not give him a Shilling to buy him a Dinner.*

Which Gentleman, tho' he had then about two thousand Pounds a Year, yet afterwards lived to want a Shilling to buy himself a Dinner.

His Account of Conversation with well chosen Friends is very delightful and instructive. I know nothing of this World comparable to the Pleasures of Conversation, with wise, honest and ingenious Friends, except in the Consciousness of doing our Duty to the most High, and the Relations we stand in, and the Peace of Mind, (I had almost said Rapture) that results from thence.

His Advice to Women, as to their Conversation with Men, is fit for all Ladies to know; and so it is for Men, that intend Chastity, not to be too Conversant with pretty Women; for 'tis ill making Gun-Powder in a Smith's Shop.

II. Essay of
Solitariness
and Retirement.

His Thoughts of Retirement are very Philosophical, just, and of great Weight; and the prudent, and cautionary

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tionary Rules he gives therein, of great Use. He writes very feelingly on that Subject, as what he found by Experience; the Art of Conversation, and the Art of Retirement, seem to comprehend the whole Scene of human Life, of both which he appears to have been a perfect Master, and to have given proper Directions in each State and Condition of Life; he allows the Vigour of Life to be spent in Publick Services, and the Remainder in Retirement, and useful Reflections for the Benefit of Mankind. If he has carried Retirement to greater Heights, than Men attached to the World can allow; it should be consider'd, that when one is writing on a Pleasure, at a time when one enjoys it, it's hard to keep within the Bounds of moderate Expressions. His lofty Strains, nevertheless tho' true, may not appear so to them who stand at a Distance, and have no Taste thereof.

To

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To speak freely of this Matter, I think these Rules touching Retirement should be observed.

First, To have such a competent Fortune, as may answer all the Circumstances of Life, when the Profits of Employment are quitted. For to be pinched in the Materials of Life, in old Age, is a miserable State, especially to a generous Mind.

Secondly, to have the Mind furnished with such Knowledge, while the Life was active, as may sufficiently employ it, when contemplative.

Thirdly, To have ones Passions detached from the World, and to have little or no Thirst after it.

Fourthly, To consecrate the latter Part of Life to the more intense Service of God, in Contemplation and Devotion, and in Benefactions to the Necessitous; and to endeavour to produce some Fruit, for the good of the Publick, for the present and future Age.

More

More particularly; I think that a Retirement to a convenient House and pleasant Gardens, near a Church, where daily Devotions may be had; a good Library, a near Friend, and the Exercise of Philosophical Experiments, which Beneficence to the Needy, is the safest and best Retirement for a wise Man. These Things will fill up the Space of Life, with Innocence and Pleasure.

As for the Essay of *Mary Magda-* III. of St. *Mary Mag-*
len's Life and Conversion, and of *dalen's Life*
the Conversion of the penitent *and Con-*
Thief, he has made many curious *version.*
Observations thereon, with very *with some*
useful Reflections. In the Author's *Reflections*
Discourse on this Subject, he hath *on the Con-*
rather played the Prelate, than the *version of*
Gentleman, and having read the Fa- *the good*
thers thereon, has been a little taint- *Thief.*
ed with their Gingle.

He has drawn it out to a Length, with so strong a Fancy and Invention, that one would rather have thought him

to have been a Man of Thirty than Ninety when he wrote it. In the winding up however of that Essay, his Exhortations to the Love of our Saviour, and Contempt of the World, have great Force and Energy.

IV. *Essay
of the Life
and Con-
version of
St. Paul.*

It's a hard Matter for a Man that writes on a Divine Subject, and who consults what the Fathers have said thereon, not to run into their Stile, and conform to their way of Expression. And thus the Author has done in this, as well as in the preceding Essay; yet his Remarks on the *Jewish* Customs, of the Manner of their Education of their Youth, what *Josephus* says of the sower Disposition of the *Pharisees*, of which Sect *Paul* was a Member, of his wonderful Conversion and indefatigable Labour in the Ministry, are worthy of Observation.

The Truth is, the wonderful Event of spreading the Gospel, by Means so very improbable, and in human

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human Appearance so unlikely, doth manifestly shew the Hand of God assisted therein.

He has truly distinguish'd Nobility into four Parts. The Beginner, Advancer, Continuer, and Ruiner of Families; and has set forth the Duty of a Nobleman, and the Gracefulness of it, when joined to Virtue, in a very agreeable Manner. The gaining Honour by Military Performances, he holds much preferable to what is obtain'd by Commerce; when the Soldier and the Scholar meet together, they make a great General; witness *Zenophon* and *Cæsar* amongst the Ancients, and Sir *Walter Rawleigh* and General *Stanhope*, now Secretary of State, amongst the Modern. Yet I cannot but say, that when that late War between *England* and *France* shall be writ by a good Hand, the Duke of *Marlborough* will shine as bright in our *English* Annals, as any General either Ancient or Modern.

The

V. *Essay of Nobility.*

The *Scotch* have a good Proverb, *That an Ounce of Mother's Wit, is better than a Pound of Clergy.* By Clergy they mean Learning.

VI. *Essay
of Content-
ment.*

His Essay of Contentment under adverse Fortune, and the many noble Examples he brings of great Men in Adversity, and the weighty Reasons he gives for a quiet Submission to the divine Providence in Affliction, are so genuine and natural, that one may easily see they flow from a Mind exercised by long Trial in that Condition. The afflicted of any sort, may here draw Waters of Consolation, to give Peace and Rest to their Minds.

His Arguments for Contentment under Afflictions, are very apt to soften the Passions, and allay the Fury which Men generally exercise under that State, and reduce the Mind to a wise and sober Resignation to the Will of God. He has writ in none of his Essays any thing
above

above the Nature of a brave and a good Man, and particularly on this Subject; he seems rather to have vented the Dictates of his own Mind, under the various States of Life, through which he had pass'd, than offer at Conjectures which he never felt. He that sets a Pattern above humane Life, may please the Fancy, but will never satisfy the Judgment of the Reader. In giving Rules for the Conduct of humane Life, in the various Events of it, we should rather write like Divines and Philosophers than Poets. His Definition of Good and Evil, is more instructive than that of *Zeno*, or any of the Stoicks; for he calls that Good which makes a Man the better, and that Evil which makes one the worse, be that Condition rich or poor, great or low, easy or painful.

His Discription of Ladies, shews his Observation of them to be very accurate; they are beholden to him; for

VII. *Essay of Women,*

for he has said very fine things of them. I would give them this Caution, not to be too free with young Gentlemen, for they who will indulge to the extream Bounds of Virtue, will easily slip within the Pale of Vice. So thin a Partition, so easy a Transition there is, between the one and the other. The Fly that buzzes about the Candle often, generally has her Wings burnt at last. The Person that would avoid burning of Shins, must sit at some Distance from the Fire. When Nature is raised by Fooleries, Virtue slips out of the Room

VIII. *Essay
of the
Knowledge
of God, and
against A-
theism.*

His Description of the Vanity of Arts and Sciences, without the Knowledge of God, is a Truth self-evident:

For all the Knowledge of this World is calculated only for the Meridian of this Life, and reaches no farther; but the Knowledge of God reaches to Eternity. And as Travellers returning to their own Country, give

a pleasant Relation of things curious, which they have met with in Foreign Parts; so the Knowledge we acquire, and Observations we make of God's moral Government of this World, of the Revolution of States and Kingdoms, and of the natural Production of his admirable Works, may serve us to entertain even Angels in the Kingdom of Heaven. For tho' Angels excel us in Wisdom, Power, and the Knowledge of some things; yet their Wisdom, Power and Knowledge are circumscribed; for none of these Qualities are infinite but in God; they are ignorant of some Things: Omniscience is the Attribute only of the Most High: The Redemption of Man in its full Latitude, they did not know. Holy Writ tells us, that Angels were desirous to look into it, and that they were inform'd of it by the Church. But be that otherwise; by the Study and Knowledge of the divine Operations, of God's natural Government of the
b World,

World, we arrive at the Knowledge of God himself; for his Majesty is known by his Works, the Contemplation of which brings infinite Pleasure to them who delight therein.

As for Atheism, Holy Writ tells us, 'twas the Fool *that said in his Heart there was no God.* And indeed nothing but a Fool could have thought or said so, and he had only the Folly of saying it in his Heart, but not the Impudence to express it in Words: Surely as he that sees a fine House, must conclude an ingenious Artist contrived it, and some Person must build it, for that Stones and Timber cannot erect themselves into a regular Building, without some skilful Builder; so he that looks on the Frame of this World, must acknowledge an infinite wise God, that made and governs it: The Belief of which, to a virtuous Man, is a mighty Support in the Day of Trouble.

IX. *Essay of Religion.*

He has set in a true Light, the Advantages of Religion, to Communi-
ties

ties in general, and to private Persons in particular, sufficient to recommend it to the Practice of the World. His Complaint of the Ignorance of Christians, with respect to their Religion, and that they take up their Religion as they do the Fashion of their Cloaths, according to the Custom of the Country where they live, hath been true, 'till of late Years, even in this reform'd Country; but the Charity Schools that have been erected and dispersed through all the Parts of this Kingdom, by charitable Persons, and Books of Instruction given away by them, hath dispelled the gross Ignorance of the common People, so that now they can give a better account of their Religion, than People of a better Education in Popish Countries, where the Darkness still continues, and must do so, where the Reading the Bible is deny'd the People, and Ignorance held to be the Mother of Devotion.

*X. Essay on
Kings and
Princes,
and the E-
ducation of
a Prince.*

His Essay of Princes and their Education hath such masterly Stroaks in it, that I could wish, for the Good of Mankind, that all young Princes would read and consider the same, and put the excellent Advice therein given into Practice; the Good and Peace of the World so much depending on the virtuous and wise Disposition of the Princes thereof: The mighty Talents, which God hath intrusted with them, will make up a vast Account for them to answer, at the tremendous Day of Judgment, which they should often think of, and that would make them better than they generally are.

The Offences they often give are so great and many, and of so universal a Nature, and the Miseries brought on Mankind thereby so general, that should they read and consider the Woe denounced by our Saviour, against those who give Offence, it would make the stoutest hearted Prince in Christendom tremble.

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ble. Witness that Prince, who proudly stiles himself *le Grand*; who makes War upon his Neighbours, for no other apparent Reason, but because he cannot dissemble his Indignation against them (~~for~~ pretended and sham Affronts) without Diminution of his own Glory. His Power to conquer was the true Reason, Disrespect the pretended.

French
King's Rea-
sons for De-
claring War
against the
Dutch in
1672.

That Prince, who keeps an Army of three or four hundred thousand Men in constant Pay, has so many Wolves in Hire, ready to devour Mankind, whenever he lets 'em loose; and has put the rest of Christendom into a Necessity of keeping up standing Armies, to prevent being surpriz'd and conquer'd by him.

Even in times of Peace, such Armies corrupt and debauch a whole Nation; where-ever they come they leave the Stains of Uncleanneſs behind them, and infect the Place by the bad Example they give. What hath this Prince to answer, for so ma-

ny Millions of Offences, which the
Soldiery of *Europe* have given origi-
nally flowing from him?

St. *Austin* calls such Princes, the
worst of Homicides, in destroying
the Souls of their Subjects.

And our Author tells us, that
Kings are not to be esteemed happy
by their Conquests, but by using
their Power, in advancing God's
Honour and Service, which will
tend to the Good of their People.

XI. *Essay of*
Man.

Tho' the Author has set forth
the Prone of Man to do Evil,
yet he hath told us the Cure is in
our own Power; he meddles not
with the Theological Points, whether
we can do Works of our selves, wor-
thy of the divine Acceptance, *ex*
Congruitate, or *ex* *Condignitate*. He
speaks in this Essay rather like a Mo-
ralist than Divine; yet does very well
shew us the Folly of running the
Hazard of an Eternity of Misery,
for a few Moments of sensual Plea-
sure.

I am

and I am entirely satisfy'd that it is more easy to mortify an unlawful Desire by Thought and Consideration, joined with Addresses for the divine Assistance, than to satiate it by Enjoyment. He that would quench an impure Desire by Enjoyment, is like him that would throw Gun-Powder into the Fire to extinguish it. Enjoyment stops the Current for the present, but the next Tide of Blood, stir'd from the Imagination of the last Enjoyment, makes it boil over into a more impetuous Torrent. In a Word, Man is the worst on best of Creatures on this side Heaven.

He that gives way to his sensitive Appetite, and indulges therein, is worse than a Brute; for Brutes have some natural Checks or Instinct, that confine and restrain their Sensations within moderate Bounds; but a *Debauchee* lets loose all its five Faculties to an universal Indulgence, even farther than Nature will afford him Strength. On the contrary, the

good Man, who makes Reason his Pilot, and Revelation his Pole Star, sails through the stormy Billows of this World with Peace and Contentment, and, having *Mens conscia recti*, does in a manner anticipate the Joys of Heaven, by fixing his Treasure there before-hand, and, by a strong Imagination of what is to come, tastes them in this present Life.

XII. *Essay
of Greatness
of Mind.*

There are abundance of Examples, both ancient and modern, of great Men that have sacrificed their Lives for the good of their Country. *Dulce est par Patria mori*, is an old Adage. Fame and the Hope of immortal Glory have carry'd Men on to very desperate Attempts, and Things, that at first View have seem'd impracticable to the Cautious and Wary, have nevertheless, by bold and resolute Men, been carry'd with Success.

He, that sets no Value on his own Life, hath generally the Life of any other

other Man in his Power. But I think true Greatness of Mind rather consists in conquering one's self, than the World; *Fortior est qui se, quam qui fortissima Vincit.*

A Man of a wild-fire Spirit may roam about the World, with a Parcel of Soldiers at his Heels, and burn and consume half the Universe, which, in the modern Language, we call a Man of Valour, great General, invincible, always victorious, &c. and yet be the worst of Men, the worst of Friends, and, all the while he is doing of Mischief, may be gratifying a wicked Passion; may wish with the Tyrant, that all Mankind had but one Neck, that he might cut it off at one Blow. But he that considers the State and Condition of Life he is placed in here, that he hath a Body that hath Appetites and Desires, strong and vigorous towards sensual Objects, and to enjoy them in a prohibited Degree; and that he hath a rational Nature, that should steer and govern
his

his sensitive Faculties, and bring them to act within Bounds; that there is a reveal'd divine Law, that commands him to lead a Holy Life; on which Considerations, he sacrifices the Desires of the Body to the Divine Precepts, and suffers Afflictions with Resignation to that Hand from whence they come; this Man, in my Opinion, is greater than *Cæsar* or *Pompey*; *Joh* had more passive Valour than *Alexander* the Great. But we have *Roman* Examples of meen Heathens, that refus'd the Riches and Honours of the World, and retired to an obscure and private Life; witness *Quintus Cincinnatus*, who was ploughing at his little Farm, when the Senate of *Rome* sent to him to come and appease the Sedition in the City; which when he had so done, he return'd back to his Farm again, and would accept no Reward. Soon after he was sent to again, to head the *Romans* against a foreign Enemy that invaded their Country; he went and was made

Dictator, beat the Enemy, rescued his Country, laid down the *Fasces*, refus'd the Lands and Treasure offer'd him for his good Services, being contented with the Reward only which Virtue brings with it, *i. e.* the Pleasure of a good Conscience, which results from doing one's Duty, and return'd back to his petty Farm.

We take a great deal of Care in ^{XIII. Essay of Children.} our Breed of Horses, and some are so curious to do the like in their Dogs; while at the same time there is an universal Negligence in the Choice of Wives; the Greatness of the Portion being the chief Thing aimed at; whereas a good Understanding should be principally desired; A silly Woman, especially if she be of a low and mean Spirit, generally bringing foolish or sheepish Children. There is no less Carelessness in the Education of Children in their tender Years. What People attend them. Foolish Nurses, and weak Women being generally the first Persons they con-

converse with, after they are able to talk. What idle Impressions, and silly Ideas must such Children have, that are thus accosted, as soon as their Faculties are able to receive any Impression. The idle Tales of such Women, who frighten Children from crying by Stories of Hob-Goblins, Spirits, and such Fooleries, have made them, when of an adult Age, afraid of being in the Dark, and of something, they know not what. They teach them Pride, and to value themselves upon their Cloaths, by asking and shewing them where they are fine, which Folly accompanies the Female Sex usually to their Grave; nor are foppish Men free from that Vanity.

They teach them revenge and Folly at the same time, by pretending to beat another by a Blow or Pat from the Hand of the Child.

They teach them lying and Folly, by telling Miss, 'twas not she that cry'd, but one behind the Curtain. Thus taught, comes the abused Infant on the Stage of the World; whereas the most discreet

creet and prudent People should be attendant on Children, to make proper Impressions upon them at first, for these stick longest with them; as for the more ripe Years, the Author hath spoke so fully that I shall add no more.

The Benefit of Laws and living by ^{XIV. *Essay*}
Rules are so evident to every Under-^{*of Law.*}standing, that there needs but little to be said in Commendation thereof.

There is scarce any Nation under Heaven, however despotick and absolute the Prince is, but yet has some certain Rule or Law for the general Conduct of humane Life, with respect to the Publick; yet when the Prince is absolute, the Subject is little better than a Slave, Law being but a Cobweb to him, which he can easily break thro', whenever he pleases. That the People conform their Lives after the Example of the Prince, and chief Magistrate where they reside, the Author hath very justly observed, which ought to be a Lesson to all Princes and Magistrates, to act with great Caution, that their bad
Ex-

Example may not lead the common People, or those of a common Understanding, into Vices. *Regis ad exemplum totus componitur Orbis.* And here I cannot but say a Word of the Benefit of our *English* Laws, which both Foreigners that live here, and Natives, have great Reason to be thankful to Providence for. The Laws of *England* secure every Man's Property and Liberty, no Man forfeits either, but by the Transgression of some known positively Law. The Magistrate cannot commit any Subject to Prison, without a Breach of the Laws; if he does, he is answerable for it to the Party injur'd. The Judge determines not according to Arbitrary Power, but according to known and stated Rules. But this Subject hath been so much spoken of, that I think it not necessary to say any more thereon.

XV. *Essay
of old Age.*

As no Man writes more feelingly of Afflictions, than he who gives his Thoughts a Vent under that Condition; so no Man can write so truly of the Circumstances of old Age, as he
that

that keeps his Understanding well to an Hundred, the which the Author did, as appears by his Effays, some of which were writ at near that Age.

The Respect he challenges, as due to old Age, especially when furnish'd with Wisdom and Knowledge; and the Consideration of good Services done to the Publick, is a Tribute, that I think ought not to be deny'd it. But nothing can make the Mind of an old Man more calm and sedate, more bright and shining, than a Retrospect of a long Life well spent, in a zealous Promoting the Honour of God, and the Good and Welfare of Mankind; for every Man's Life is to be estimated by its Usefulness. Integrity of Mind, a Love of Truth in the Soul, and the Consciousness of doing all we can, for our most munificent Benefactor, to whom we are riding post in old Age, makes that Scene of Life full of Joy and Pleasure. *St. Paul* was full of Rapture, when he was going off the Stage of Life, tho' by a violent Death. But few Courtiers come within
this

this Character; for to them generally Falshood and Deceit are as natural, as bowing and cringing; and as for Truth, it hath no Place in their Souls. They join themselves to a Party, that they may mount up to be the Head of it, with no other View, but to betray and destroy it, and to aggrandize themselves thereby. Oh blessed Sincerity! Oh happy Integrity! But this wicked State of Life, is as ancient as *Seneca* the Tragedian, witness these Lines,

*Colit hic Reges, calcet ut omnes,
Perdatque aliquos, nullumque levet,
Tantum ut noceat, cupit esse potens.*

WHITLOCK BULSTRODE.

Blind-stamped



ESSAYS

O N

Various Subjects.

Of Company and Conversation.



WHEN God created *Adam*, who the first Moment was a perfect Man, yet he was not made to be entirely detached, and to live independant of his Kind; for tho' he had nothing in Prospect but Plenty, Pleasure, Innocence, and Security, and by the Dignity of his Nature was set above the Society of meer Animals, yet God saw his Being imperfect without a Helper, and that his Happiness



ness was not compleat whilst he remain'd solitary ; wherefore God miraculously reliev'd him, by dividing him, to unite him, and made one Part of him a Companion for the other, to maintain his Reason with a more equal Converse ; for which End God ordain'd Speech, from whence we derive all the Advantages of Society, and without which Men would have been useless to each other. For by this we possess the most valuable worldly Blessings, Friendship and Society, which are esteem'd amongst the Pleasures of the first Magnitude, the Comfort of Life depending upon Conversation, Humane Society being like the working of an Arch-Stone, where all would fall to the Ground if one Piece did not sustain another ; and yet Company is so dangerous, and Speech so liable to be deprav'd, that what was intended for our Advantage, is become the Source of all our Misfortunes. For Original Sin came first out of the Mouth by Speaking, before it entred hers by Eating ; and therefore the due Management of that Member may justly be reputed one of the greatest Mysteries of Wisdom and Virtue, since we find, to our Sorrow, the first Use *Eve* made of her Tongue was to talk with the Tempter, and from that

and CONVERSATION.

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that Discourse to tempt *Adam*, who was no sooner fallen, but he makes a frivolous Excuse less able to cover his Sin than the Fig-Leaves his Nakedness; and this Viciousness of the Tongue hath descended from the Infancy of the World even to this Day, for amongst our greatest Depravations, there are none more notorious than that of Speech; for we do not only fall by the Slipperiness of our Tongues, but we deliberately train them to Mischief, and what was first intended for the Benefit of Humane Society, is now become the great Disturber of it, we living in an Age wherein we count it a part of our Birth-right to let loose our Tongues, and to use the Spur where we should hold the Bridle; whereby Conversation is generally corrupted, and he that converses has almost as many Snares as Companions, there being scarce any single Man, but by his Discourse, Example, or Behaviour, does recommend to us, or imprint in us, or by a kind of Contagion insensibly infect us with some Vice or other; so that Conversation, which was intended to cultivate our Minds and civilize the World, hath turn'd it almost to a Wilderness. Upon this Account some Men will take a Pett at Mankind, and walk

into the Desarts to avoid Company, when it is more prudential to stand their Ground, and to fence against the Inconveniencies that may happen; and if they fear bad Company, they should keep close to Men of Virtue, and stand carefully upon their Guard; it being more reasonable to be conversable for the sake of the Good, than to fly from every Mortal for fear of meeting with bad People: If every Man were possest with this Shinefs, not only States and Kingdoms, but even Humane Nature would be destroy'd; for to what end was Speech given to Man, if it were not for Entertainment of each other? And must we quit our Station, and turn Savage by ourselves, and suffer no Company, for fear of Bad? This is to take Things by the wrong Handle, for nothing but our own Miscarriages ought to affect us, and not those of other People.

'Tis certain that all Mens Bodies are naturally of the same Clay, the difference of Education only is the Potter's Hand that forms them into Vessels of Honour or Dishonour; there being no Humane Means more effectual towards ripening and sharpening Mens Intellects, giving them an edge and quickness for Conversation, than good Edu-

and CONVERSATION.

5

Education, because it takes them in that Age wherein their Faculties are, as their Joints, pliable and tractable, and so capable of being by Exercise improved into great Degrees of Strength, Activity and Ability: So that one of the greatest Blessings which Man can receive at God's Hands, is the favourable Blessing of good Education, which polishes and purifies Nature as one would do a precious Stone wholly defiled with Earth; and this makes Men become like Angels, when without it the best Natures would still dwell in Brutishness. Now since after good Education, it is a great Part of Wisdom as well as Breeding, to learn what is convenient, and to take the true height of our Acquaintance, who conversing with our Minds, cast upon them either Graces or Deformities; it will therefore be highly necessary for young Gentlemen, who are tender of their Honour and Credit, to be more than ordinarily careful of being too venturous of any Company, and to be very curious in taking an exact Survey with what Persons they may safely and decently Converse, and how they ought to behave themselves therein.

It is usual with Physicians, in infectious Times, to forbid most strictly, the smaller Excesses and Exorbitances of Diet, as apt to breed any Distemper, because every small Accident of that Kind (thro' the Malignity of the Air) is then likely to turn into the Plague: So now that Atheism and Profaneness are rise in the World, and spread much, and Debauchery is so predominant and contagious, that we daily see many Men of virtuous Dispositions and good Inclinations, (which would have grown to Abilities) to be by ill Company most perniciously corrupted; some Cautions herein seem therefore highly necessary; for as if we breath in an infectious Air we shall suck in Diseases, so if we live in bad Company we shall soon add to their Number, and learn their Vices and Imperfections.

There is nothing more dangerous for young Gentlemen than to mistake themselves in the Choice of their Company: This is a Point of such Importance, that upon it depends the whole Course of their Lives and Manners; the frequenting with wicked Men brings us acquainted with Vice, makes us behold it without Emotion, by Degrees we begin to act it with some Pleasure, and Time breeds in us a Habit.

*Principiis obsta sero Medicina paratur,
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.*

St. *Augustin* well expresses the Danger of this, saying, “ It is a Nail driven in-
“ to a Post with a Hammer, which after
“ the first and second Stroke may be
“ drawn out with little Difficulty,
“ but being once driven up to the
“ Head, the Pincers can take no hold
“ to draw it out, which cannot be
“ done but by Destruction of the
“ Wood.

He that lives in this great Theatre of the World, should in the first Place learn how to suit himself into sundry Habits, that he may be enabled in this Comedy to represent many Persons, no Man being fit to appear upon this Stage till he knows how to act his Part to the Life; and therefore he must labour to have his Mind made pliable, which may stoop and rise according to the several Conditions and Capacities of Men he associates with, not fearing to speak to the Greatest with due Observance, nor disdain- ing to converse familiarly with the Meanest, respecting Goodness wherever he sees it, which he shall as often find under a Russet Coat, as under a

Velvet Cassock, and with moral honest Men as soon as with the more Learned; for Conversation hath made very accomplish'd Persons without the Assistance of Learning, the World being a great Book which instructs continually; Conversations are living Libraries, not at all inferior to Books; good Conferences are like Flints, which from a cold and dark Heap produce Heat and Light, if Men strike them one against the other; and the familiar Discourses of two or three good Wits, may be more advantageous to us than the empty Disputations of many Pedants together; and they vent more in one Hour than we shall read all Day in a Library.

There is nothing that puts better Thoughts in a Man than a good Companion; for Example hath the force of Precept, and touches the Heart with an Affection to Goodness; and not only the frequent hearing, but the very seeing of a wise Man delights us.

The best Rule herein is to associate with those who may be the better for us, and we for them; these respects are mutual; for while we teach we learn: It is not safe to trust our selves with much Company; whosoever goes much abroad, he scarce comes home the same Man

Man he went out, something or other discomposes him; for it is with our Minds, as it is after a long Indisposition with our Bodies, we are grown so tender, that the least breath of Air exposes us to a Relapse.

There is certainly much Pleasure and Satisfaction in communicating our Thoughts, and in the Intercourses of Friendship well chosen; and therefore *Seneca* said, *If Knowledge and Wisdom were offered him, on the Terms of a Secret, and that he must not speak of it, he would positively refuse the Present.* And *Tully* in his *Offices* tells us, *if a Person had all the Blessings of this Life, yet if he was kept from all Company, and never to see or converse with Men, he had much rather Die, than live in such Condition.*

Now the first Step to Conversation is our outward Carriage and Comportment, wherein the less we are constrain'd, our Actions and Thoughts seem thereby more Innocent: The Differences of Men are easily read in their Behaviour, and a short Observation of that will often tell us as much as a long Conference. Some Mens Carriage is like a Verse, where every Syllable is measured; but where there is so much Care about the
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Outside, there is commonly a Remifness in what belongs to the Mind: it being as rare to fee a starched complimental Man wife, as to fee a Woman valiant. There is a fort of Men who have an earnest Application to make every thing fit right about them, which strikes too deep into their small Stock of Thoughts to allow it Furniture for any thing else; and therefore to do right to these fine-spun Gentlemen, Conversation is too coarse a Thing for them, and it's best to leave them to their Taylor, with whom they will live in better Correspondence than with any other Company. Indeed, a good Prefence and handsome Mein, sorted with Valour and Wisdom, does a Man excellent Service, (if he spoils it not with Affectation) and carries with it (as Queen *Elizabeth* us'd to say) *Letters of Recommendation*; and, if I am rightly informed, this was the only Thing that brought the Great Duke of *Buckingham* into Favour with King *James* I. by seeing him at a Masque in Court. Certainly, if our outward Comportment be good, the adorning the Mind does double that Excellency; if ill, it will make it good, when the Mind performs what the Body promises not. Our Behaviour
should

should be like a well-made Suit of Cloaths, more proper than gaudy, more fit than fine. In our outward Carriage, all manner of Affectation is unseemly, there being nothing more becoming a Gentleman than a native Freedom therein, a Gracefulness of Behaviour setting off much when it is not constrain'd. Dancing is good, and adds Grace to a Man, when he well performs it; but a Man must not set himself to it as if he made it his Trade. Dancing makes the Body free, and not so stiff but to move gracefully; and a Man's Skill is therein perceiv'd, tho' he stands still: But whoever intends to make it his Master-piece, one may call it excelling in a Mistake, which is *no good Commendation*, as a late great Lord said. It is a great Advantage to be a good Actor; for Action is a kind of Expression, and Words well chosen are agreeable, when they express Things that please; so all that is expressed by the Face and Body, is well received when done with a good Grace. But we must not here mistake; for there are those that are sometimes Actors of Nothing, as well as those that are Speakers of Nothing: The Action and Air of the Countenance have certain Charms, which have a great Influence
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on our Minds : An Oration spoken by a good Orator appears great and lofty, though penn'd in common Terms, and compounded of ordinary Conceptions ; and many Preachers have in their Pulpits charm'd their Auditors, whose Sermons in Print were scarce worth reading : I have heard Verses recited in a good Tone, which have been admir'd, which being read by another, their Esteem was much diminish'd ; and it's probable the Reason of this Alteration proceeded from the Harmony which was then wanting : We should not look upon this as strange of good Orations, and agreeable Conferences, if we call to mind that of Musical Instruments, touch'd by the Hands of an exquisite Master ; there are some Tones which inspire Sadness, and sweetly incline our Souls to Languish ; and there are Airs which rejoice and make our Hearts merry, and pleasingly compel our Feet to dance their Time.

In Conversation, it is not enough to have Wit, but he must be an extreme well-bred Man to know how to be pleasant in Conversation, amongst Persons that know how to Judge ; because most Men have not a delicate Taste, nor are able to discern what is best ; and it often hap-

happens that such Persons are taken, nay even charm'd with certain ridiculous Parts they play to them; but tho' these Fooleries are current amongst some, yet well-bred Persons do not love such kind of Buffoonry, and those that use them are rather the subjects of Scorn than Laughter, to those that rightly understand: Such are half-witted Men, who have a tinsel Wit, which shines amongst those who cannot Judge, petty Merchants of small Conceits, who have an empty Habit of Prating, without Meaning, they always aim at Wit, but generally make false Fire.

'Tis true, we cannot shew too much Wit in pleasant Conversation; yet a Man must have a great Care not to shew himself too forward, as if one would appear ready to make Jest and speak fine Things: There is something of a free Way, which cannot be well expressed, which hath a much better Effect; but yet it is not good to be too Reserv'd, nor affect Singularity; an open and complaisant Carriage hath very great Charms to attract Love: However, what Advantage soever any one hath, he must be pleas'd with others, if he would have others pleas'd with him: And if we like not our Company, let us withdraw from them;

them; but whilst we are in Company, we should carry our selves so, that we should be acceptable to those with whom we converse, though we have no Kindness for them. As for those who think to revenge themselves by a cross Carriage, they do themselves more Injury than they do to others. The Love of Society is natural, but the Choice of our Company is Matter of Prudence, and the Conscience of giving good Example is one of the greatest Obligations any Man can lay upon the Age he lives in.

It is indeed a fair Step towards Happiness and Virtue, to delight in the Conversation of good and wise Men, and where those cannot be had, it is best to keep no Company at all. When Men are good and virtuous, they are as good alone as in Company, but most Men are of themselves the worst Company they can keep: Let such therefore converse with others, and avoid themselves; but he that cannot secure himself in Privacy, shall be much more expos'd in Publick. Many a Ship is lost in the Harbour, but more in Ocean. There are some Persons whose Company we cannot too much frequent; 'tis certain, by seeing them often, besides the Improvement we have by being with them,
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we gain a good Esteem to our selves, as we perfume our selves unawares by walking amongst the Jessamins and Orange Trees. Witty Men, who are well bred, always say something that pleases, and seldom do any thing which hath not some Mark of Worth and Breeding; and by conversing with and observing them, we may not only inform our selves of such Things as are necessary to be known for the making an accomplish'd Man, but we also learn how to apply them, and likewise so far as to know when 'tis proper and mannerly to be silent: But we must know how to distinguish, for we shall often hear very good Things come from Men, who behave themselves with as much Becomingness as can be desired; yet many times this is but borrow'd Language, and the Actings of a Part, and therefore we must not regard so much that which appears polite and regular, as we do certain other Things, which shew whether there be a Foundation, and that the Understanding goes farther, and is of larger Extent.

We find in some Men a certain Plausibleness of Carriage, which pleases in young People, but yet passes away like a Flower or a Dream, and we shall often
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see these Men become the Neglect and Scorn of those who once admir'd them; but a well-bred Man hath more solid Virtues, tho' he be less busy and forward to shew himself in the World; and if we love a Man for his good Breeding and Honesty, we shall always love him. Yet it is not enough to have a fair Outside to make a Man agreeable; that which is of greatest Importance, is the Will regulating our Intellectuals, and taking Care that our Head and our Heart be in good Order; for no Man can ever be excellent without having a good Heart and much Wit.

An accomplish'd Person, tho' of never so much Wit, ought not to be too confident of himself; for the more he excels, the more Care he ought to take not to prescribe to the Company; for naturally every Man is afraid of a Master-Wit, and Men do not love to be hector'd out of their Opinions, it being esteem'd the common Birth-right of Mankind, that every Man to opine and judge according to the Dictates of his own Understanding, and not of another's; and therefore a Magisterialness in Opinion is very unbecoming Men in Conversation, for it does not only fasten upon our Nature, but upon the better Part of it,

it, our Reason : Freedom is the endearing'st Thing in Society, and where that is controull'd, Men are not very fond of associating themselves. 'Tis natural for us to be uneasy in the Presence of those that assume an Authority over us ; as Children care not for the Company of their Parents or Tutors that govern them. And Men will care less for theirs, who would make them Children by usurping a Tutorage over them. This Peremptoriness in Conversation renders wise Men disobliging and very troublesome, and Fools ridiculous and contemptible, we seeing none so peremptory as half-witted People, who have just enough to excite their Pride, but not so much as to cure their Ignorance : This is the Effect of a mean and imprudent Education ; a Man who has convers'd only with the lower sort of Company, who durst not dispute nor examine his Assertions, thinks the same false Coin will pass over the World, which went current amongst his petty Comrades ! And we may observe this Fault is most usual amongst young Men, who have come raw into Company with good Fortunes and ill Breeding. And therefore those Persons are most to be esteemed, who shew their Wit without offending

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ding any one ; and such are usually hated, who make use of Wit only to the displeasing of others ; and a wise Man ought to avoid the Company of such, it being a small Advantage to have Wit, if we do not make use of it for gaining the good Opinion and Love of the World. We ought to deal with others, with that Patience, Respect, and Moderation, which we expect from them, not setting forth our own Opinions imperiously, nor rejecting the Opinion of others arrogantly, remembring that we are all enwrapped in a deep Mist, and that all our Reasoning is but groping in the Dark ; and therefore we should pass gently over the Errors of our Neighbours, to oblige them to the like Account : But many Gentlemen are so far from this generous Humour, that they always behave themselves disdainfully in Company, as if they could not set a just Value upon themselves without the unjust Contempt of others. But this Pride is commonly a Wind that blows only one Way, down Hill upon those below him, upwards they breath gentler Gales, it being one of their most studied Faculties, to perform all Acts of the highest super-errogating Civility to those above them : Now there is nothing that
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makes a Man more distasteful to Company, than this haughty Humour, it being not only Pride, but Inhumanity, to attribute so much to the Prerogative of Birth, as not to shew Affability and Respect to the meanest.

The Conversation of those who are bred in Armies is not commonly very pleasing, but in Recompence, they are said to be Men of Honour and Reputation, as if that would excuse their Wants in every Thing else, when there is nothing so disgusting as to be disagreeable and morose in Company. This is like certain Women, that pretend to Virtue, who value themselves much upon their being coy and fierce, which makes Men think all is counterfeit and affected, and that they are easier gotten, than those who observe Good Manners and Breeding, and are as affable as these are severe. Such Women are like those peevish Mistresses, who think they have a Licence to kick and scratch, provided they do not kiss, as if Ladies could not be honest without being rude. A confident, yet a modest Carriage, which is neither mean nor sullen, having nothing which favours not of Goodness and Honesty, is that which is most esteem'd in the World, and takes with every Body :

Women who have most Wit, like best a discreet Reservedness in Men, those being usually disappointed of their Aims, who throw, as it were, their Hearts at Ladies Heads, and at the first Dash tell them more of their Love, than can in any probability be true, and many times more than they desire to hear.

In our Conversation, it is good Advice to spare and thriftily to order that which a Man knows, and tho' he hath that in his Head which is better than Silence, yet he ought to be more willing to hear, than to speak, to learn, than to teach; it being a great Folly to be more ready to shew all that is in us, rather than to learn Knowledge of another, to spend our own Stock, rather than to get new. When we hear we receive, when we speak we give, and tho' it be more glorious to give, yet it is more profitable to receive; and therefore a just Moderation herein is best, not to be over-Silent nor Talkative, the first shewing Stupidity or Scorn, the last Giddiness of the Brain: Prudent Men will therefore speak no more than to bring on Discourse, and will give others their turns of Speech; a Civil Guest will no more Talk all, than Eat all the Feast. It is a great Advantage to know
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how to speak and to write ; when either smells too much of Study it pleases not ; the general Opinion is, that Men should write as they speak, and speak as they write ; but we seldom do either, as we wish we could : In order to this, it were good when we write to imagine we are speaking, that we may not put in any Thing that is not natural, or which may not be spoken in Company ; and when we speak, we should fancy we are writing, that we may not say any Thing that is not fitting : Many People are said to speak well, who cannot write well, but I doubt there is a Mistake herein, for some Men may seem to speak well in Appearance, when they do not in Effect : For when a Man really excels in Speaking, he may do the same in Writing ; but this latter requires more Care, and one may write well, without knowing how to speak well ; for we usually see those who make it their Business to write well, have commonly a languishing Way of Speaking ; for to speak well, is not only to make our Thoughts be understood, but to express our Apprehensions, which are two very different Things ; and there is no greater Sign, that a Man well understands himself, than to be able perspicuously to

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speak

Of COMPANY

Speak to the Understanding of another; and our Discourse should always be measur'd by the aptness of it to whom it is Addressed; for unless our Speech be fitted to the Capacities of those we Discourse with, tho' it be never so elaborate, it will rather Confound than Edify.

Thus, the best Art of Speaking shews it self under a natural Dress; it is like plain natural Beauty, those that are the most Perfect shew themselves least, and when our Words smell of Art and Study, one may conclude, they that say them have but little of either, or else that they know not how to make use of them. This is the Fault of those that Speak so, that they cannot be understood but by the Learned: We should therefore to our Power rather mean Wisely, than speak Learnedly, much less Affectedly; for those whose Tongues run Proud after Words, are of very little Use, but amongst such Ears as call a Bag-Pipe Musick, for their Lips open like a Purse without Money, and their Tongues like a Fencer before a Pageant, stir, but not strike. A Gentleman should talk like a Gentleman, that is, like a wise Man; his Knowledge ought to be general, he should have a Taste of every Thing,

Thing, he should not be a Slave to one Science, one Knowledge is but Part of the House, like a bay Window, no Man will build his House so maim'd, much less himself, he must be Compleat.

All those who have given Rules for Civil Life, have, in order to it, put very severe Restrictions upon the Tongue, that it run not before the Judgment. 'Twas *Zeno's* Advice to dip the Tongue in the Mind before one should Speak; and *Theophrastus* was us'd to say, It was safer trusting to an unbridled Horse, than to intemperate Speech; and daily Experience confirms this Aphorism, for those who set no Guard upon their Tongues are hurried by them into a thousand Indecencies, and very often into real considerable Mischiefs; and whereas Men should keep a Lock upon their Lips, they give their Tongue the Key of their Heart, and the Event hath been often as Unhappy, as the Proceedings was Preposterous.

And as the Words must be the Product of our Judgment, so they must be temperate and decent, mixed with Courtesy and Civility; for he that hath calm'd his Passions, hath nothing to betray them to rash and rude Language, which

is a Foam cast up only by the Billows of a turbulent Mind, and can never be the Issues of a serene composed Temper; neither does any Thing charm us more than gracious Language, *Quæ ne illos quidem quos damnat offendit*; a pregnant Example of which was seen in the last Age, at the Trial of the Earl of *Stafford*, Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland*, in the Year 1642. where, amongst others that were appointed by the House of Commons to manage their Impeachment against him, there was one eminent Lawyer, who urged very smartly against his Lordship, but yet with great Respect and Civility of Language: And when the Earl came to reply, as he did to every one, he said he had been very roughly handled by most of the Pleaders; but that he was very much beholden to one civil Gentleman amongst them, (naming the former Person) who, tho' he had touch'd him nearer the Quick than any other, yet he was oblig'd to return him Thanks, because he had cut his Throat with a clean Knife; Thus we see good Words are afforded at the same Price as ill, and are not only cheap, but prevalent upon all Occasions.

Next

Next to this Graciousness of Language, we should be very careful that our Speeches carry Integrity with them, Candour and Ingenuity being most esteem'd in Discourse: Those who have upright Hearts, their Judgment (how small soever) will be still the same, but those who have many Turnings and Doubles in their Heart, never have a right Understanding, there is always some counterfeit Light, which gives them false Appearances, and then their Artifices and Craft shew they have not Parts sufficient to effect their Designs by fair and honest Ways; whereas the Way that pleases worthy Persons, is that Freedom of plain-Dealing. What a Gracefulness so clear a Source gives to all the Actions of our Life? How it beautifies our Words and Thoughts? And how pleasing a Thing it is to speak well, when so much Sincerity goes along with it? And tho' one may not perhaps be happy in all Things by following this Maxim; however, one is sure at least to gain the Esteem and Affection of those who understand true Merit, nothing being so commendable in Conversation as to have an upright and sincere Heart, which seems to be the Foundation of Wisdom.

Speech

Speech was given to Man as the Image and Interpreter of the Soul: It is *anime index & speculum*, the Messenger of the Heart, the Gate by which all that is within issues forth, and comes into open View: And therefore the Philosopher said well to the Child, *Loquere ut te videam*, Speak that I may see thee, that is the Inside of thee; for as Vessels are known whether they be broken or whole by their inward Sound; so is Man from his Speech, which carries with it not only a great Influence, but a great Discovery of our Minds; and Integrity herein is the publick Faith of Mankind. With all sorts of Men we should deal ingeniously, yet reservedly, saying that we think, but thinking more than we say, it being not good to say at all Times all that the Heart thinketh, tho' all that the Heart thinketh be good. Freedom of Speech is sometimes to be foreborn, lest we give others Power thereby to lay hold on the Rudder of our Minds; for in all there are some Places weaker than others, and prudent Men will take heed of lying uncover'd that Way: 'Tis true there may be possibly in Discourse a Fault of Omission; but this is a right-hand Error; a Man may be sometimes sorry he said

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no more, but very often that he said so much: God hath given us two Ears and one Mouth, that we ought to Hear more than to Speak; we have no Ear-lids to keep us from Hearing, and often must Hear against our Will; but our Mouth shuts naturally, and we may keep our Tongue from Speaking, unless by Intemperance we lose that Privilege of Nature.

The Truth is, our Tongue is so slippery that it easily deceives a heedless Guard, Nature hath given it some unhappy Advantages towards it, it being the most ready for Motion of any Member, and therefore is to be the more carefully managed; the chiefest Rules to be prescribed herein, are Sufficiency and Pertinency, a Man should not only know what to say, but what not to say, for in Speech enough is better than all; Words are but the Lacquies of Reason, of which to send more than will perform the Business is superfluous, and the Discretion in Speaking, is not so much in Speaking few Words, as in Speaking none Impertinent; otherwise the Dumb were born with great Advantage, if we must retrench the Use of the Tongue, instead of moderating it.

A wise Man's Words must be weighty and material ; they are *weighed in the Balance*, says the Son of *Syrach* ; and therefore a Gentleman's Discourse should be such as might answer that Character, no Man ever attempting to put Froth and Bubbles into the Scales.

When *Zeno* heard a young Man full of Talk; *Aures inquit in linguam defluxere*, he said, His Ears were fallen into his Tongue ; intimating thereby, that they should hear much, and speak little : The Truth is, when People are very young, they cannot judge rightly of any Thing ; and it happens either by Experience, Reflections, or meeting with some intelligent Persons, they come to be of another Mind, and despise that which they once so much admir'd, and many times laugh at themselves, when they examine themselves without Flattery. It is certain, he that always talks, adventures himself too far, thereby depriving himself of Observation, which is the great Advantage of Society; and from whence comes Experience and Wisdom : Herein we should imitate cunning Shopkeepers, who shew their Wares in a half Light, upon Occasion we should speak but sparingly, and rather starve than surfeit our Auditors.

ditors. Our Discourses must not be too florid in the Beginning ; it is a Thing much to be wished, that all which one says be good and fine, according as the Subject merits ; but we must proceed by Degrees ; Nature is in this, as in all other Things, a very knowing Mistress ; consider how she proceeds insensibly, the fairest Day when it begins to break and appear, hath so little Light, that it is hardly discernable whether it be Day or Night ; and nothing is so great a Sign, that the Way of Speaking is noble, as when it leaves some certain Things to be apprehended without speaking them ; and therefore it is good to know when to give over, and to proceed to other Matter, or at least we should give them another Face and Turn, because Diversity seems not tedious.

To make our selves be heard with Pleasure, we must say such Things as others will be glad to hear, and say them pleasantly, which is the best way to make us be lov'd ; besides, when we please others well, we are likewise better pleas'd with our selves. Excellent Painters never draw all, they still allow something for you to exercise your own Imagination, and always leave you more to find out than they discover : The Graces appear

pear very rarely, and even when they are seen, they will not be consider'd full fac'd nor uncover'd; in the same manner we should not open our selves too much; and in our Discourses we should observe this as a general Rule, Either to speak fitly, or to be silent wisely; for many, by their Silence, may pass for wise Men, whom Speech would presently discover to be otherwise. When the As disguised himself in the Lion's Skin, he frighted all the Beasts, and even the cunning Fox, till he heard him bray. *Pro certo scias nisi rudentem audivissem & te ego timuisssem*: Unlearned Men, which seem of Ability to Strangers, are quickly discover'd by their Loquacity, and those that speak much in Company seldom speak well; for they that well understand themselves know not how to dwell in Talk. *Long Discourses*, says *Plutarch*, *like over-feather'd Arrows, shoot beyond the Mark, and by wearying the Attention, ordinarily lose both Game and Labour*. *Aristotle* answer'd a Man well, who, having held him in a long Discourse, in the end begg'd his Excuse, telling him he might have sav'd his Apology, for he had not minded what he said. And it was a smart Reply of *Theocritus* to an ill Poet, repeating many of his

his Verses, and asking which he liked best, answer'd, *Those which he had omitted*: And indeed, the Company of such who talk much to little Purpose, ought as little to be regarded; for if a Man be vain and trifling in his Discourses, both he that hears, and he that answers, will be equal Losers of their Time. And if we shut our Ears to trifling Discourses, much more carefully ought we to keep our Hearts from drawing in the Breath of obscene Discourses, which are the very Pest of Conversation. We should herein imitate *Xenocrates*, the Philosopher, who, being asked an obscene Question, and giving no Answer, being again importun'd to answer, said well; *De tali re te hominem vanum interrogare decet, me autem respondere nequaquam*: Obscene Speeches, like Oil falling upon Linnen, will spread much; and as the Poison of the Body enters by the Mouth, so the Poison of the Heart enters by the Ear; and therefore those who have Honesty in their Hearts, will have only civil and modest Words in their Mouths.

Next to Modesty in our Conversation, we must be careful not to be too inquisitive into other Men's Affairs; and if we would be persuaded to affect a
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wholsome Ignorance therein, it would much conduce to our Ease and Innocence; for it is the Itch of the Ear that breaks out at the Tongue, and were not Curiosity the Purveyor, this Trade would soon be set aside. The Boy in *Plutarch*, being ask'd what he carried hid under his Cloak, answer'd well, *That he therefore carried it so, that the other might not know it.* An unseasonable Inquiry into Things shews a great Weakness and Folly in the Inquirer.

When *Socrates* was asked by a curious Person, What was done in the next World? he told him, *He had never been there, nor spoken with any that came from thence.* St. *Augustin* tells us, *Curiosus est qui ea avidè scrutatur quæ ad se non pertinent, studiosus vero qui diligenter ea perquirat, quæ ad se attinent.*

We shall see some Men very inquisitive into the Religion of their Acquaintance, being very shy of discoursing with Men of differing Persuasions, and put on an angry Zeal against them, believing they are fighting God Almighty's Quarrel, and therefore grow into a harden'd Severity against all who dissent from them: And we shall frequently see Men, whose Manners and Conditions are very conformable in all the necessary

necessary Obligations of Human Society, to avoid each others Company, and grow unfociable to each other, meerly because the one cannot think as the other does : Whereas our Opinions come from our Heads, our Affections from our Hearts ; and therefore a wise Man will no more trouble himself about his Companions Religion, than about the Religion of his Physician or Lawyer : The Offices of Friendship which one Man owes to another, having nothing to do with that Consideration ; and Men do not so much question, whether their Servants be Virtuous, as whether they be Diligent, which is the Thing for which they make use of them. But yet this is a pernicious Error, for Men to think themselves no otherwise concerned in their Servants, than they are in their Horses and Oxen, to look upon them only as another Species of working Cattle ; and, so they do their Business, care not how arrant Brutes they be : Whereas Gentlemen should consider, that they with themselves are common Servants to one great Master ; and that the Subjection of one to the other, is but the wise Oeconomy of their Lord, who hath made the one as Stewards or Supervisors to regulate the rest, and

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then it will appear a great Unfaithfulness to neglect this Charge; for tho' they receive Wages, they are not below their Care, Nature having made no such Distinction, and Returns of Kindness and good Usage are as much their Due to such of them as deserve it, as their Service is due to their Masters when they require it. But leaving this Digression, there are others so far from this Niceness, that in their Discourses they despise and mock at Religion, because they would not be under the Restraints of it; Religion is against them, and therefore they set themselves against Religion; and it is observable, that those who upon other Subjects their best Friends must needs acknowledge to be sufficiently dull, yet can talk very wittily in derogation of Religion, with some kind of salt and smartness; and because Religion frets them, it makes them wynch and flog, and gives them some kind of Wit and Sharpness in rallying against it. These are Persons that never say any Thing well, but what is ill to say; and therefore we must be very careful to distinguish between what exacts the Title of Wit from our Judgments, and that which appears but such to our Corruptions: This prophane Liberty

erty is too much us'd in our Nation, and hath crossed those Seas which environ *England*, which is not so happily sever'd from the World's Vices, as from its Continent: But I wonder how such Men should have the Fortune to be esteemed Wits, only for Jestings out of the common Road, and for making bold to scoff at those Things, which ought to be revered of all Mankind: But we are fallen into such a prophane and sceptical an Age, as takes a Pleasure and Pride in unravelling almost all the received Principles of Religion.

However, we must not think the worse of Religion, because some Men are so bold as to despise and deride it; for it is no Disparagement for any Person or Thing to be laugh'd at, but to deserve to be so; there being nothing so excellent but a Man may find Ways to traduce it, and therefore we ought not to have the less Reverence for the Principles of Religion, because idle and prophane Persons can break Jest upon them; for a little Wit, with a great deal of ill Nature, will easily furnish a Man for Satyr; there being nothing so Sacred, which, by the petulancy of Wit, may not be made ridiculous; and those Buffoons which do so, spare neither

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their Souls nor Reputation to shew their Abilities, by prophane more than ingenious Sallies : But it were happy if Men would use a nobler Exercise for their Wits, than to persist in their scoffing Humour, which is not only an Enemy to Religion, but to every Thing else that is worthy ; and yet we shall see some Men so prophane, as to make use of Scripture Phrases to give a relish to their most insipid Discourses ; and were it not for this Magazine, a great many Mens Raillery would want Supplies, and they would be very Mute without this Topick. In our Conversation, we should carefully avoid the customary Sin of Swearing, which hath none of those Allurements which other Sins have ; such Men play the Platonick to Damnation ; and the great Wonder is, that we see none who own God more in their Oaths, than those that disown him in their Lives ; a great Absurdity of Wickedness, to have a God to Swear by, none to Believe in, none to Pray to. There is indeed such a Deluge of Impiety and Prophaneness at this Day overflowing our afflicted Nation, that it hath brought down most terrible Judgments upon it : Wickedness is now become the Mode and Fashion amongst them ; so that Men there

there begin now to fear the Singularity of being Innocent ; and a Man may with less Scorn appear there in the antiquated Habit of our Fore-fathers, than to own the obsolete and condemned Qualities of true Piety, Loyalty, Duty and Sobriety : And what Temptation is it to the Vulgar to be wicked, when their Superiors have beaten the Path before them : When Gentlemen are Atheistical, Clowns will think themselves very modestly Wicked if they be but Prophane ; and when they hear their Betters swear, they will soon find they are as well qualified for that part of Greatness as the best. It were very happy for our Nation, if those Seducers of the People would found a Retreat to their misled Followers, and would teach them Religion, Obedience, and Submission, as they have formerly led them to Impiety and Disobedience.

But to return to our intended Discourse ; Gentlemen in their Conversation ought never to reveal Secrets. Our Eyes, Tongues and Looks, are the Windows and Doors of our Hearts, we should therefore be cautious to keep every thing from breaking out, which may be safer hid than revealed. The Wits of futilous Persons are like the

Vessels of the *Danaides*, that emptied as fast as they fill'd; that which comes in at the Ear, goes presently out at the Mouth, because Indiscretion, which directs to hearken, as lightly as to Speak, lets fly out, as easily as lets in, and disperses as soon as collects. These publish what they know, only that they may be telling of News, an itch where-with their Tongues are strangely over-run, who can as well hold a glowing Coal in their Mouths, as keep any thing Secret which they think new, which is a most childish Vanity, and Men must have Souls of a very low level, that can think this a fit Entertainment: These Men not having usually Depth enough to supply themselves out of their own Store, can therefore let nothing pass by them, no more than a Mill, which is always going, cannot afford any Water to run wast. Now these Men are more Impertinent, and not less Injurious than the most Malicious. *Anacreon*, who was choaked with a Grape-stone, died as surely as *Julius Caesar* with his three and twenty Wounds; and a Mans Reputation is as soon fool'd and prated away, as maliciously Betray'd, nay perhaps more easily; for where the Speaker can least be suspected of Design, the
Hearer

Hearer is the apter to give him Credit; and this way of insinuating, is like those Poisons taken in at the Pores, which are most insensibly sucked in, and the most difficult to expel. These Men are so perpetually busy, and continually imployed in finding Faults with others, that they cannot look towards themselves; and whilst they put false Dresses and Varnishes to hide their own Deformity, they cannot allow the least Imperfection of anothers to remain undetected. If these Men would look into their own Hearts, they would find such work for their Inquisitions and Censure, that they should not be at leisure to Ramble abroad for it: Now such as busy themselves with Tales of their Neighbours, and entertain Company with them, furnish their Wits, as young Girls do their Closets, with Shells and Gew-Gaws; and sience they bestow their Time so ill, they should Study the Anatomy of Flies; and to punish their Bodies as well as their Minds, they should live only upon Shrimps, wherein there is more Business than Meat: It is indeed a gross Error to think (so we speak in Truth) we may declare any Mans Faults, for we must as well speak in Charity as Truth, and yet many Men

will slide easily into Detraction, thinking it no great Matter, not considering the smallest Sins are the Devil's greatest Stratagems ; and if *Satan* fetter us, it is indifferent to him, whether it be by a Cable, or by a Hair : St. *Augustin* therefore, who was sensible of the commonness of this Vice, had this following Distick written over his Table.

Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam,

Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi,

The Truth is, we should never in our Discourses make absent Persons the Subject of our Mirth ; those Freedoms which we use to a Man's Face, are commonly more moderate and equitable, because we expose our selves to the like from him ; but Back-blows are disingenious, shewing we intend not a fair Tryal of Wit, but a cowardly Murther of a Man's Fame : But some Men think their Wits to be a-sleep, if they dart not out something that is piquant, and pierceth to the Quick, but this Vein ought to be bridled.

Parce puer stimulis, & fortius utere loris,

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There is great difference between Salt-ness and Bitterness, and no Weapon cuts so deep as a reproachful Word, neither is any Wound longer in curing: And those Jeers are most resented which touch a Man's Reputation, chiefly that of Wit and Discretion, of which even Fools seem wary, and few will confess their Ignorance: The Reproaches of Wit are like the Corrodings of *Aqua fortis*, they ingrave and indent Characters that can never be defaced; a dull Reproach quickly vanishes, no Person thinking it worth remembring, but when 'tis steel'd with Wit, it pierceth deep, leaving such Impressions in the Fancies of the Hearers, that it sometimes happens to survive both Speaker and Hearer, and carries it self to Posterity: Many a poor Man's Infirmities had been confin'd within a narrow Compass, had not some picquant strain of Drollery scatter'd and dispers'd them; and therefore those who rejoice in Point of Reflection upon each other, that love to disparage and back-bite their Fellow-Creatures, and gratify their proud and haughty Humour in Derision of others, should read those excellent Verses, which to this Purpose St. *Prosper* gives us in this following Epigram:

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*Culpare in quoquam quæ non sunt nota, malignum est,
 Præsertim quæ sunt cognita, si bona sunt.
 Non pateant faciles sævis rumoribus aures,
 Quæ nescire juvat credere non libeat
 Linquantur secreta Deo, qui si quid opertum est
 Inspicit, & nullis indiget indiciis.*

Defamation is certainly one of the most unkind Designs that one Man can have upon another, every Man being naturally tender of his Reputation, which yields a Perfume even after Death, and a Man's Reputation can hardly be tossed without receiving some Bruise; the heavy Scandals under which some Men have lain, having taken their Rise only from some Inadvertence or Indiscretion; and even doubtful Accusations leave a Stain behind them, and often prove indelible Injuries to the Party accused: And as in the Case of Stealing, it is Proverbially said, *If there were no Receivers, there would be no Thieves*; so in this of Slander; if there were fewer Spreaders, there would be fewer Forgers of Libels, the Manufacture would be discouraged, if it had not these Retailers to put off the Wares. A Man may sometimes do Things which to God and his own Conscience are abominable, and yet keep his

his Reputation with Men, but when his secret Crimes are detected, then he becomes infamous; so that tho' his own Sin be the material Cause, yet the Discovery is the formal Cause of his Infamy; and he that hath divulg'd his Fault stands accountable for all the Consequences that flow from that divulging.

Some Men are maliciously apt to run down the Reputation of any that stand in their way either of Pleasure or Preferment: When *Joseph's* Chastity had changed the Scene of *Potiphar's* Wife's Passion, she presently fixes the Crime upon him: So when *Ziba* had a Mind to undermine *Mephiboseth* in his Estate, he first practises upon his Fame in a false Accusation: And how often have we seen in our Time these Scenes re-acted; and tho' many Men have been Wicked enough to commit this Crime, yet none have been so Impudent as to avow it; all Crimes have had their Abettors, only this sort of impudent and lying Slander is so much the Dregs and Refuse of wicked Men, that none have yet had Chymistry enough to sublimate it, and to bring it into such a Reputation, that any Man would think fit to own it, till our last infamous Age of in-

insulting Vice, where the Wickedness has not only been admitted into Practice, but appears also bare-faced, which did always before keep on the Vizard; for no Man had ever the Confidence before to own himself a false Accuser of his Brethren, till that most wicked Age, which hath not only permitted, but encouraged and rewarded Men for being false Accusers, to the eternal Reproach of our Nation, and of them that suffered it.

Next to avoiding the Conversation of these foremention'd, we should be cautious of Conversing with such who Censure and Judge severely of other Mens Actions, which is one of the highest Violations of Charity; and a good Man will never make severe Constructions, but set every Thing in the fairest Light, and put upon it the most candid Interpretation that the Matter will bear, which is of great Importance to the Reputation of our Neighbour: For he that gives the first ill Character of a Man, fixes the Stamp, which ever after goes current in the World, it being the Business of many to lay on more Load, but of few to take it off; for most People lessen their own Beam into a Moat, and magnify their Neighbour's
Moat

Moat into a Beam: They turn the reverse End of the Perspective to represent their own Faults small and at a distance, and shuffle the other End to their Neighbour, to make them seem great. Now such as make bitter Investives against other Mens Faults, and indulge and palliate their own, shew their Zeal lies in their Spleen, and consider not so much what is done, as who does it. A Man that affects an extraordinary Splendor of Reputation, is glad to find any Foibles to set him off, and will therefore let no Fault nor Folly of another enjoy the Shade, but bring it into open Light, that by such Comparison his own Excellencies may appear the brighter: But this shews a dangerous Spirit, and because he wants solid Worth, on which to bottom his Reputation, he is feign to found it on the Ruins of other Mens. Diamonds sparkle in the Sun-shine, 'tis but a Glow-worm Virtue that owes his Lustre to the Darknes about it. *Tacitus* gives it as an ill Inclination of *Domitian* the Emperor's Temper, That he imploy'd himself in catching and tormenting Flies, and that he turn'd his Scepter into a Fly-flap, and was therefore justly esteem'd an Enemy to Flies, and a Fly to his Enemies ;

mies; and truly they fall not under a much better Character, either for Wisdom or good Nature, who snatch up all the fluttering Reports they can meet with to the Prejudice of their Neighbour.

Whosoever hath a tender Side, the World will be sure to find it, and to put the worst Colour on all that Man says or does, give an Aggravation to every Thing that may lessen him, and a spiteful Turn to every Thing that may recommend him; but that Wit is much misemploy'd, that is wholly directed to discern the Faults of others, when it is necessary to be used to mend and prevent his own: When we do not frequently turn our Eyes inward, to see what is amiss within us, it is a sign we have an unwelcome Prospect at home, when we care not to look upon it, but rather seek our own Consolation in the Faults of those we Converse with.

Indeed, some Men's Tempers are so malign, that they wish ill to all, and believe ill of all Men, like *Timon the Athenian*, who profess himself an universal Man-Hater: 'Tis certain there are some, in whose Ears nothing sounds so harsh as the Commendation of another, and nothing so melodious to them as a Defamation. *Plutarch* gives an apt Instance
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of this upon *Aristides's* Banishment. When a mean Person had propos'd Ostracisme, being asked, What Displeasure *Aristides* had done, he reply'd, None, and that he knew him not, but that it griev'd him to the Heart, to hear every one call him a just Man. I verily believe some of our keenest Accusers in these Days might give the same Answer; for no Man that is eminent either for Piety, Loyalty, or Moral Virtue, but he shall have many invidious Eyes upon him, watching for his Halting; and if any the least Obliquity be espied, he is used worse than the vilest Malefactor; for such are try'd but at one Bar, but these are arraigned in all Companies and in all Discourses.

Next to rash Censures, Flatterers are most dangerous, who may be compar'd to Flies that have pretty shining Wings for two or three hot Months, but the least cold Whether makes an End of them; or rather like the *Heliotrope*, open only towards the Sun, but shut and contract themselves at Night. Let the Object of their Adoration be but eclipsed, they can see none of those Excellencies which before dazzled their Eyes, and their old Idols is often made a Sacrifice to their new, and all malicious Discovery
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very is made of their falling Friend, to make an Interest in their rising one. There are such Crowds of Examples of this Kind in our Age and most unhappy Kingdom, that it is fitter to furnish Precedents for the future, than to borrow any of the past Times.

This is certainly the most horrid Crime that could be committed, and the blackest Colour wherein we can view a Parasite; and as an Ape hath a peculiar Deformity above other Brutes, by that awkward and ungraceful Resemblance he has to a Man; so a Flatterer is infinitely more hateful, for being the ugly Counterfeit of a Friend. A Pretence of Friendship and Kindness is now become the general Bait to all base Projects, all the wolfish Designs that have been lately acted upon our *English* Stage, have walked under this Sheeps Cloathing; and as the World goes, Men have more need to beware of those who call themselves Friends, than those who own themselves Enemies, because the one traiterously Betrays you, whilst you expect no better from the other.

It was heretofore the Character given of the *English*, by an ingenious Person, That they were both excellently Endowed, and rarely tempered by God
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and Nature, and were the most piously affected of all others; and that there were not in the whole World either better Catholicks or better Protestants; that there was no Nation under Heaven more remote from ill Nature and Revenge, nor Men who were more honestly and even more naturally Just, nor so far distant from using base Treachery of every kind. But, alas, the Race is now spoiled by mixture, and we are no more what we were, every one endeavouring to deceive and delude each other; and that Freedom and good Nature, (which was thought peculiar to *England*) which is a kind of Balsam to the whole Life of Man, (and without which Life is no better than a Punishment, both to others, and most of all to a Man's self) is banished out of our Nation, and those Flowers of Virtue, which were thought to grow no where else but in our Island, are now degenerated into Weeds of Flattery, Treachery, and Undermining: Now the Suppression of this Vice depends upon those Persons to whom it is addressed; let but Princes entertain such Parasites with a severe Brow, and with sharp Expressions of Dislike, these Leeches will immediately fall off. In *Sparta*, when all Laws

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against Theft prov'd ineffectual, at last they fixed the Penalty upon them that were robbed, and that did the Business; and if it were made amongst us as infamous to be Flatter'd, as it is to Flatter, I believe it might have the same Effect.

Plutarch gives an excellent Example of a Man that could not be persuaded to Flatter, in the Person of *Philoxenus*, who being a good Poet, and despising some dull Poetry of *Dionysius* the Tyrant, he was by him condemned to the Quarries; where having been for some Time, he was by the Mediation of Friends recalled; and at his first Appearance, *Dionysius* shew'd him some other of his Verses, which he thought his Master-Piece; which, as soon as *Philoxenus* had read, he made no Reply, but call'd to the Guards to carry him back again to the Quarries; a brave Example of a Heathen Poet, who prefer'd a corporal Slavery before a Mental

As it is a great Part of Wisdom not to be flatter'd, so it is to pass by the Reproaches of others: Herein we should imitate *Socrates*, who being informed of some derogating Speeches one had used of him behind his Back, made only this Reply, *Let him Beat me too,*
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when I am absent, I care not. However, it is good to shun the Company of those who take Pleasure in exposing others to Contempt and Derision, as one would avoid the Heels of a Horse that Kicks every one he can reach.

It is the height of Incivility to abuse Persons in Discourse; to abuse Inferiors argues a mean contemptible Spirit, Superiors is dangerous; to abuse a Friend is to lose him; a Stranger, to lose your self in his and the World's Esteem: We should therefore endeavour to keep a fair Reputation with all Persons, with Superiors 'tis good to be humble and complaisant, not low and flattering with Equals grave not morose, with Inferiors courteous and fair, not fullen nor impetuous.

'Tis an indiscreet Thing for a Man in Company to take Exceptions; and if he have any Defect in his Person, which he suspects Men are apt to make Derision of, 'tis a Folly to vex himself or quarrel at it; but the best way to prevent others in their Scoffs of this kind, is, first to speak, and let them know as much as they can tell him; and then he ought with a manly Courage, to contemn, as unconcerned, the Indiscretions and Follies of others: It is no sign a Man is

found, who complains because one touches him. In my younger Days, I knew an old merry Droll, who much frequented Company, who having in his Youth taken a great Liberty to rally upon married Persons, in his declining Age took a Wife, where every one might have had her for his Money; and the first Treatment of any Friend in his Conversation, was still the Discourse of his own Marriage, to prevent all that could be said against him.

And as we should not be troubled when others tell us of our Imperfections, so on the other hand we should never Praise our selves: It is a great Blemish for a Man to be the Trumpet of his own Excellencies; he who puts a modest Rate upon his own Deserts, does best multiply his Fame, but he that speaks in his own Commendations, does as if he meant to sell himself. And if the most accomplish'd would but seriously consider his own Imperfections, how many Things he wants, and how few he knows, and those how lamely, he would make use of his Reason and Discourse, not for Commendation of himself, but to gain Instruction from others. Such Mens Company is very troublesome, who are only accustomed to the
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Admiration of themselves, thinking nothing besides them worthy of Regard; if these unbred Minds were made acquainted with those Excellencies which God hath bestow'd on other Men, they would not think themselves like *Gideon's Fleece*, to *have sucked up all the Dew of Heaven*; they would find perhaps they rather answer'd the other Part of the Miracle, and *are drier than their Neighbours*: And if such will needs be reflecting on themselves, let them compare their Crop of Weeds and Nettles with that of their Corn, and then they must either think their Ground is Poor, or themselves very ill Husbands.

Now the way to Profit by Conversation must come from our selves, our Question is the Fire, that draws out either the Quintessence or the Dregs of Things; and therefore the usefulest Part of Discourse, is to give Occasion by asking Questions, by intermingling our Discourses with Tales, with Reasons, and telling of Opinions, it being a Testimony of as much Knowledge, to ask a pertinent Question, as to give a pertinent Answer: But herein a great Regard is to be had in what Company we do it, for great Men love not to be asked Questions, unless where Questions

may pull out the Thread of their own Praises: He that in Discourse questions much, shall undoubtedly learn much, if he apply his Questions to the Skill of the Persons with whom he Discourses, and put them upon those Things they understand best; for thereby he shall do them a Kindness, in giving them Occasion to please themselves in Speaking, because every one loves to speak of that wherein he is most expert, and himself shall continually gather Knowledge, by fetching from every one the best that is in him; for when Men are reduced to Speak of those Things wherein they are most conversant and skilful, the conversing with them is an excellent School: But we shall commonly see Men take the contrary Course, chusing rather to Discourse of any other Profession than their own, supposing it to be so much new Reputation gotten; but this way a Man shall never come to Perfection: As for Tales, to tell a Story well, to continue it in a handsome Method, cloathing it with suitable Expressions without Impertinencies, and to represent therein Persons and Things to the Life, is one of the best, and perhaps one of the hardest Parts of Conversation. The late King *Charles II.* my Master,

Master, of Glorious Memory, had a most particular Talent of this Kind, and was wonderful pleasant in Conversation ; and us'd very frequently, soon after his Restauration, to have his private Sallies in the Winter-Evenings, to divert himself with some particular Persons of Wit, whom he still chose to sup with him, where I had the Honour divers Times, by his Majesty's Command, to wait upon him at Supper ; (for he would then have none of the Grooms of his Bed-chamber with him.) In these Divertisements the King permitted those who Supped with him to make use of their Wits in telling some pleasant Stories, and in quick and handsom Repartees, wherein the King had an excellent Vein, and would as well take as give without Offence ; which Liberty was always us'd with great Respect by those who had the Honour to Sup with him ; which were usually (*Hannibal Sestad*, base Brother to the then King of *Denmark*) the Duke of *Ormond*, the Lords *Carlingford*, *Wentworth*, and *Crofts*, with Sir *Frederick Cornwallis*, Sir *John Mynnis*, and sometimes *Tom Killigrew*. In these Conversations, I have heard excellent Discourses, witty Repartees, mingled with pleasant Tales, wherein the King

had so great a Faculty, that scarce any Thing could be said, which he would not Parallel with some pleasant modern Story, which he would tell with such Grace and Quickness as charm'd all the Company; but when he found them warm'd with Wine, and that their Wits began to be piquant and sharp, and to Sting each other, the King would always then interpose his Royal Authority, and would stroak over the severe Nips they gave each other, by throwing Dust upon them, telling them, *Good Jests ought to bite like Lambs, not Dogs; to Tickle, not Wound*: Wherein his Majesty shew'd great Prudence, for we have seen in our Days, many Examples of the Mischiefs that have hapned by too severe Railleries; in such Fencings Jest hath prov'd Earnest, and Florets have been turn'd to Swords, and not only the Friendship but the Men have fallen a Sacrifice to the Jest: 'Tis sure we shall die in Earnest, and it will not become us always to live in Jest; But the Gift of Raillery in this Age hath devoured the more solid Qualifications, and is accounted the greatest Accomplishment; a strange inverted Estimate, to prefer the little Ebullitions of Wit before solid Reason and Judgment; if these Men
should

should accommodate their Diet at the same Rate, they should eat the Husk rather than the Pease, and feed upon Froth and Bubbles.

There is nothing more becoming a Gentleman than a Cheerfulness in Conversation, every Thing being by so much the more lively and cheerful, as it comes nearer to its Creation, and nothing hath more light and sprightfulness in it, than an ingenious conversable Integrity: Virtue is the Minds constant Health, the Pulse of it still beats true and evenly; she is sprightly without Levity, free without Discomposure, and conversable without Coyness or Cheapness, as free from Stupidity as Lightness, from being a Log as a Squib. Besides, a Vivacity of Spirit is usually accompanied with such a kind of Wit as makes us acceptable in Conversation: Cheerful Persons being graceful in all they do, are most valuable in Company; for who had not rather associate himself with a merry conceited Humour, than with a *Cynical* Wise Man? Many Men indeed blame Mirth because they cannot endure it; which is to blame the Sun, because Owls cannot endure the brightness of it; as if we should quarrel with Light, because our weak Eyes are dazzled with its Beams.

There

There are some Men whose Dispositions lead them to fasten and feed on Miseries, and to glide over the Pleasures of this Life; which puts me in Mind of what passed betwixt *Diogenes* the Cynick, and *Aristippus* the Courtier, who passing by *Diogenes* as he was at Dinner in his Tub, *Diogenes* said to him, *If you could content your self, as I do, with Bread and Garlick, you would not be the King of Syracuse his Slave: And you,* reply'd *Aristippus, if you knew how to live with Princes, you would not make such bad Cheer.* 'Tis true, this morose and pedantick Philosophy is not designed for a Gentleman, they are born to be Sociable, and ought to understand all the Maxims of the World; Complaissant Humours, assisted with this practical Knowledge, gain the Friendship of all People, because they know how to set forth gracefully the Talents of Nature.

There is no Means so powerful and apposite to divert the fixed and intent Cares of the Mind, and to exhilarate a sorrowful Heart, as pleasant Company and Musick which mollifieth our Minds, and stays the tempestuous Affections of it, if there be any Dregs of Cares that lie lurking in our Thoughts, most powerfully.

fully it wipes them away. They say, *Alexander* one Day excited by the Musick of a Harp, took Arms, and plaid the part of a Common Soldier. *David* himself charm'd the Evil Spirit, in the Body of his Father-in-Law, by the Sweetness of his Harmony; and we daily see the Terror of Death cannot so much affright Soldiers, as the Sound of Drums and Trumpets does animate them; the Singing of the Nurse makes the Child quiet; which evidently demonstrates the powerful Effects of it in Nature it self; and the very labouring Men find Satisfaction in it, who sing in their Work; and without doubt, the Voice persuades and instructs much more than Reading, the first being accompanied with certain Spirits which we may call Living, the other is nothing but the Pourtraicture of the Thoughts of a Dead Man.

Sir *Thomas More* in his *Utopia*, makes Musick an Appendix to every Meal; and *Epiſtetus* esteems a Table without it to be no better than a Manger: *Lewis XI.* says *Comines*, at the Interview betwixt him and *Edward IV.* of *England*, invited him to come to *Paris*, and told him as a great Part of his Entertainment, that *he should hear most sweet Voices, exquisite Musick, and should not want*

want the Company of fine Ladies, and the Cardinal of Bourbon to be his Confessor; which he thought sufficient Endearments to such a sensual Prince as Edward IV.

Indeed, innocent Mirth and pleasant Company whet out Wits, quicken our Fancies, and make us afterwards more fit for any Employment: *A merry Heart is the life of Flesh*, says Solomon, and *Gladness prolongs his Days*; and is highly useful, when 'tis only our Divertisement, not our Business; but the excess of it is very ill-becoming, and to set our Wits on the Tenter-hooks for so slight a Purpose, is abominable: But merry Humours, tho' they have a great Pleasantness in them, are obnoxious to many, because if Jest (wherein they are most conversant) be well receiv'd by some, yet they offend more than they please, and create more Enemies than Friends: For tho' Points of Wit be very fine in Discourse, yet if they be made so sharp as to draw Blood, those that use them may have Occasion to repent of them. 'Tis true, flashes of Wit give us a pleasant Light, so long as they burn not; but this Liberty must be bounded with Caution; for Wit should rather serve for a Buckler to defend by a handsome Reply,

Reply, than a Sword to wound others, tho' with never so facetious a Reproach: In these Rencounters therefore the Charge should be Powder and not Bullets; and we must take heed, that we pass not from this familiar Freedom of Drollery, which causes Mirth, to severe Scoffing, which provokes Scorn, endangers Quarrels, and gives an Umbrage of a spiteful Intent.

This pleasant kind of Wit is a Talent usually given to Youth to play withal, and it is a pretty Gift to begin the World with, if they understand the right Use of it; otherwise it is an unruly Engine, wildly Striking, sometimes a Friend, and not seldom the Engineer himself. Sharp Speeches therefore which fly abroad like Darts, are to be tenderly us'd; for tho' they be Shot at others, they are many times thrown back upon themselves: As when the Earl of *Rutland*, who had been instrumental in the Preferment of Sir *Thomas More* to be Lord Chancellor of *England*, and thinking the Chancellor did not shew him that Respect he merited, meeting him accidentally, he told him in Reproach, *Honores mutant Mores*, alluding to his Name; which the Lord Chancellor sharply return'd upon him, telling him, *It was*
not

not true in Latin, but in English, That Honours changed Manners, which was the Lord *Rutland's* Sirname. Thus we shall see some Mens Wits whip Opposition, and manifest the Quickness of their Dexterity in the Sharpness of their Returns, (like the Artisans Weapon, that makes his Enemies Arms his Enemies Destruction) and by a nimble Repartee, turns the Words spoken upon the Speaker himself. There is much Pleasure in this kind of Wit, there being no such Stillatory as a quick Brain, which refines and makes use of whatsoever comes within the Pan for its Reception. But those Gentlemen who have this Satyrical Vein, and make others afraid of their Wit, had need be afraid of other Mens Memories ; for many times, after they have given others Occasion to Laugh, they are made themselves to Cry.

The Rules to be given herein, are carefully to observe Times, Circumstances, and Persons, knowing when to Jest, and when not ; to use apt and handsome Repartees, natural and not affected, that have more Salt than Gall, speaking what is just and proper upon every Occasion, which is better than fine Conceits, which yet are liked, if they be good ; but Equivocations, Quib-
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bling with Words, and Puns, which have only the appearance of Wit, are ridiculous, and yet these have brought some Men of very ordinary Parts into Credit. There is as much difference between Jests pick'd up here and there, and those that come from the Spring-Head, as betwixt wise Discourses, and harmonious Fooleries, between a solid Sufficiency, and what is painted; a Jest should never be serv'd up but once, when 'tis Cold the Vigour and Strength of it is gone. Many refuse to wear Buff because 'tis lasting, and a Man of Wit will not Apparell his Brain in Durance. It is therefore pleasant to mingle Jest with Earnest, for nothing pleases more than Variety; and it is a dull Piece of Service to tire any Thing too far: But as all Creatures by secret Instigation love to be doing that in which they are most able, so these Men of Wit being delighted to hear themselves Talk, cannot contain themselves within a Mean, nor have Patience sometimes to be Silent, so that we may justly wonder such absurd Persons should speak so well: Now there are some Limits wherein these kind of Wits ought to be circumscrib'd, there being certain Persons and Things priviledged from
Jesting,

Jesting, as Religion, Matters of State, great Persons, any Man's present Business of Importance, and any Case that deserves Pity : To Play upon any Man's Unhappiness or Deformity, is inhumane, and Men may be as oppressive by their Parts, as by their Power ; and God did no more design the meaner Intellectuals of some for Triumphs to the vanity of the more Acute, than he did the Possessions of the less Powerful, as a Prey to the Avarice and Rapine of the Mighty ; and it is a much greater Barbarism to reproach a Man that wants the Gifts of Nature, than him that wants those of Fortune ; for a Beggar may have impoverish'd himself by his own Fault, but in natural Defects there is nothing to be charged, unless we will arraign that Providence which hath so disposed : And those whom God hath blessed with higher Degrees of Sagacity and Quickness, ought not to look down upon others as Objects of their Contempt and Scorn, but rather of their Care and Pity, endeavouring to secure them from those Mischiefs to which their Weakness may expose them, and their Folly should neither dismount our Wisdom, nor violate our own Integrity : But the World is grown to that pass, that Men will rather put

put stumbling Blocks in the way of the Blind, and pull away the Crutch from the Lame, that they may Sport themselves to see them Tumble, such a delight we take in improving the Imperfections of others, that it's become the great Excellency of this Age to be dextrous at it. But good Nature is willing to interpret Things to the best Sense, to take Things by the right Handle, and will never go to the rigour of the Matter, nor break out at others Misfortunes; for to be touchy and peevish in discovering a Fault, to kindle like Gun-powder at the least Spark, is a sign we are perfectly wrapt up in our own Interest, and that we have nothing of Sweetness or Balsam in our Blood. We must therefore endeavour to sweeten our Humour, and keep the Ferment down; and tho' the World be full of malicious Men, yet by this we shall disappoint the Pleasure of ill Nature, break the force of an Affront, and make the Injury fall upon us like Hail upon Tiles, rattle without Mischief, and at last to tumble into Dirt.

To jest at Calamities, is a great sign of ill Nature: When *Caninius*, a Consul of *Rome*, died the same Day he was made Consul, *Cicero* would needs put a

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Jest

Jest upon that Accident, and said, *O vigilantissime Consul sub quo Nemo pransus est, nemo canavit, nemo dormivit, magnum prodigium vidimus, Caninio Consule, non sensimus ver, non estatem, non autumnum: The State*, saith he, *hath had a vigilant Consul of Caninius, that never slept in all his Consulship*, But this was justly thought a Fault in *Cicero*, for Calamities are not to be the Subject of Jest. *I love Jest well*, said a wise Man, *but not the loss of my Friend*; and those who lose themselves to shew their Wit, are much like *Heliodore* Bishop of *Tricca* in *Theffaly*, who having wrote the *Ethiopick* History very politely and elegantly, but withal somewhat loosely and wantonly, was thereupon summoned by a Provincial Synod, who told him, His Work did more endanger the Manners than profit the Wits of his Readers, as nourishing loose and wanton Conceits in the Heads of Youth; and therefore they gave him his Choice, either to retract his Book, or leave his Bishoprick; whereupon he rather chose to resign his Place in the Church, than to lose the Reputation of his vain Wit. And every Age shews us remarkable Examples of this Kind; for sharpness of Wit commonly carries
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with it two ill Companions, Pride and Levity; ingenious Persons miscarrying in nothing more than in too much pleasing themselves in the Goodness of their own Conceits; where sometimes the like befalls them, which hapned to *Xeuxis* the famous Painter, who having pictur'd to the Life an old Woman, so pleas'd himself in the Conceit of his Work, that he died with Laughing at it.

Being thus prepar'd with outward and inward Furniture for Conversation, it is necessary to consider how and where to bestow it; for he that is provident of his Time, will be also prudent in the choice of his Company, and choice of his Actions, least the first engage him in Vanity, and the latter by being Criminal, in throwing himself and his Time away.

This World is link'd together by Love, and Men by Conversation; and one of the greatest Pleasures we enjoy herein, (if duly weigh'd) is the sweet Society of Friends and Relations, which multiplies our Joys and divides our Grievs; there being no stricter Union upon Earth, than that of a virtuous Friendship; and nothing can be more Satisfactory than to improve and benefit

that Person who is thus become a Part of us.

Men of Quality love to deck and embellish the Place where they inhabit, and Friends dwell in each other, and therefore cannot but be delighted in beautifying and adorning those Minds they have thus chosen to live in, by purging them from all Foulness, and rendring them as splendid and illustrious as is possible, and certainly there is nothing more ravishing than a Friendship thus entertain'd: That Calamities attend it as well as Comforts, is but a weak Objection; for what Goodness is there without Temptations, and what Happiness in this World not to be transform'd: It is the Gracefulness of every Thing that makes it valued; Gold, whilst it is in the Mine, is good for nothing; when 'tis cut and beaten into the thinness of Leaf-Gold, 'tis wasted and blown away, and quickly comes to nothing; but when it is tempered with such an Alloy, as it may receive a Stamp and Impression, then it is Current and Useful.

Thus Cynical Men, who out of Pride of their own Parts disdain Company, and can no more endure Conversation than Owls the Day-Light, like Gold in
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the Bowels of the Earth; their Parts are useless and good for nothing, who cannot without Offence walk the Publick Ways; they are Saints indeed in private, and live only to God and to themselves; but being call'd forth into common Life, they are like Bats in the Sun, and utterly ignorant of Publick Affairs. And the Conversation and Friendship of those whose End is only Civility and mutual Visits, like Leaf-Gold they are blown away with every little Wind of Distaste, or Neglect of Ceremony; and in an equal Degree to these are they to be reckon'd, who are *Amici inter prandium & sartaginem, ad ostium tabernæ fratres & amici, ad ostium carceris neque fratres neque amici*: But the useful and profitable Conversations which give a right Stamp and Impression to our Minds, as those Friends that will be Supporters to us in our Prosperities, Safeguards in our Difficulties, Counsellors in our Doubts, and Comforts in our Adversities. With these we ought to contract a strict Acquaintance and Inwardness, and to embrace their Company upon all fitting Opportunities, using herein a wise Moderation, which carries with it both an Honour and Grace of Manners; for to seek Com-

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pany

pany and to fly it, are to Extreams to be blamed; to shun all Company argues a contempt of others, and makes us generally hated; and to seek too much after them, is a sign of Idleness in our selves, and makes us slighted: We must love our Neighbours as our selves; and to shew that we love them, we must not avoid their Company; and to shew that we love our selves, we must sometimes be alone, and take Pleasure in our selves. The *Italians* have a very significant Proverb, which says, *Measure it a hundred Times before you cut it off*; meaning you should stand upon your Guard, till you discover the Inclinations of those you converse with; and therefore we should be careful of laying out our Friendship too lavishly at first, since like other Things it will be so much the sooner spent: Neither should it be of too quick a Growth, for the Plants which shoot up too fast, are not of that Continuance as those which take more Time for it: We shall see some who have hot and cold Fits of Friendship, that shall hug you one Day, and not know you the next; this unevenness of Temper is by all means to be avoided in Conversation; a good Man will always keep a steady Course of Friendship, which may run like

like a smooth Stream, and never change, but be a perpetual Spring, for we cannot find the Gust and Relish of a true and fixed Conversation, till we come to a great Freedom with each other; for they that converse only as Strangers, are always under some Restraints and Uneasiness, and do never open themselves freely the one to the other.

In the long Experience I have had in the World, I have seldom, if ever, found any Man's Company worth enjoying, that did not begin with some Difficulty, if not Prejudice; for Conversation, like Oysters, is nothing the better for opening so easy, and so soon. Neither is there any more dangerous Acquaintance, than that over-hasty Familiarity contracted betwixt good Fellows, as we call them in *England*, who usually begin their Friendship in the Entry, and strike it up in the Cellar, where Servants are disciplin'd to be the Ministers of their Masters Luxuries, whose Vices seldom miss to be taken up by them, as if they were the Badges to witness to whom they belonged. There is no greater Mark nor Discovery of a Man, than to judge him by the Company he keeps, it being impossible but that he shall much resemble them, and partake some of their Qualities.

lities. *Si juxta claudum habites, sub claudicare discis*, says Plutarch: *Bad Company is very contagious to the wisest and best settled Men.* What befel Joseph was out of Contagion, frequenting the Egyptian Court learnt him to Swear by the Life of Pharoab. *Dum spectant oculi laesos, laduntur & ipsi, Multaque corporibus transitione nocent.* I remember Aristotle in his Problems makes a Question, Why Health does not infect as well as Sickness, a diseased Person often communicating his Infirmary, never his Health; the Reason is, says he, because the Health of the Body hath no transient Force on others, and is personal and not communicative. But Malvezzi tells us, it is for that Nature in Providence drives away the Evil from it self, and thriftily reserves that which is Good; and for this Reason it is, says he, that those who have the Plague are desirous to come into Company, that they may give it to others; and by the same Reason, those who have ill Qualities in them, will be sure to work and apply their Vices, like Rust, into the nearest and purest Mind.

Edward II. of England was a sad Example hereof; for his *alter idem*, his great Favourite Gaveston, was a Man of excellent

excellent Parts of Body, and of no less Endowments of Mind, being both valiant and witty; and if his Valour could as well have made the King valiant, as his Riot made him riotous, there might have come some Good of their extraordinary Conjunction; but seeing Virtues are but personal, and Vice communicative, it made the King not only more Vicious than he would have been, but Vicious where otherwise in all Appearance he would not have been. The Consideration of this most mischievous and dangerous Conversation, caused *Seleucus* to make a Law, wherein he forbad all Company with wicked Men. And *Charondas* the Lawgiver punished those for wicked, who frequented Lewd Company. Neither was it a sufficient Answer, which *Antisthenes* gave, when he was told of his Conversation with wicked Men, That Physicians live amongst the Sick; for though they help sick Mens Health, they often impair their own, by continued visiting and touching diseased Persons: But yet this must be favourably understood; for there is no Rank or Quality of Persons so absolutely excluded from our Conversation, but only such a Degree of ill Company, as may Poison and Cor-

corrupt the Good ; for in nearer than Company, our Friend, and in somewhat nearer than him, our selves, we must allow some Inordinaries, and many grains of Allowance must be given to make the best of us Current : There may be likewise Occasion sometimes of conversing with ill Men, not for Society, but Business, and for Reformation, as our Saviour convers'd with Publicans and Sinners. And therefore no Man is so tied up, as to come in no Company but good Men ; for he that cannot live amongst the wicked, must seek for another kind of World than this, and for more perfect Creatures than Mortals : It was not ill said of the Philosophers, *Omnes odit qui malos odit* : *He that hates ill Men hates all Men* : And if a Man will love none but honest Men, where will he find any Exercise any object of his Love ? If a Man will hold Friendship with none, do Offices of Society to none but good-natur'd and sociable Men, he will leave many necessary Businesses undone : The forwardest and pervers'est Man may be good for some particular Occasion ; a crooked Piece of Timber is not thrown aside, 'tis good for some Uses ; the very Flesh of a Viper is made an Antidote, being

ing mingled with other Simples and Ingredients, and by good Company and kind Usage many an ill Man is better'd. And since a Magistrate ceases not to be a Magistrate for being an ill Man, much less does a Man cease to be a Man, and so to have Title to those Duties of Conversation and Business which are rooted in Nature, because he is of an ill Disposition. It is indeed a great Part of Wisdom to contract Friendship and Inwardness with none but good Men, that so by our Intimacy with them we may participate of their Goodness; for Men are not like Bees, whose Sweetness makes Things of another Nature Sweet, it must be good to receive, and then perhaps we shall make it better, but if ill, we make it worse.

Some Naturalists say, there is a way of Castration in cutting off the Ears, that there are certain Veins behind the Ears, which if cut, cause Barrenness; our Ears are the Aqueducts of Knowledge, and if we cut those, that is, intermit our Conversation with good and wise Men, this will prove a Castration to our Understanding. The Advantages we receive hereby was well intimated; in that which *Socrates* said to *Eschines*, who seeing every Body give *Socrates* some-

something, he said, *Because I have nothing else to give thee, I will give thee my self: Do so, says Socrates, and I will give thee back again to thy self, better than when I receiv'd thee:* And certainly the Conversation of well-disposed Men, who have most look'd into the Affairs of the World, and have studied Men as well as Business, is a great Improvement of our Understanding, and Fortifier of our Judgment, especially if they be Men of Years, Experience, and Virtue, and fam'd for Wisdom, for their Testimony is of greater Force, and something is always to be learn'd from them. For where Wisdom holds with Age, and Memory hath not unthriftilly spent her Comings in upon Time, their Conversation is certainly the wisest Book; there is only one Fault accompanies them, their great and unwearied Desire of Talking, which seems troublesome to many that hear them; yet I must confess, in my younger Days, I have ever heard such with Delight, and did at all Times most joyfully accept what they deliver'd, who are of all others most able to instruct Youth; and surely there is much Reverence owing that Age, which deserves a fatherly Respect and Honour from us.

A Gentleman in Conversation should be affable, not imperious, knowing Humanity and Gentleness is a common Debt to Mankind, and therefore will not contract his Civility into so narrow a Compass, that it shall swell into Compliments to them above him, and not suffer one Drop to descend on those beneath him, but will so dispose its Streams that all Channels may be fill'd with it : But some Gentlemen, like the Pharisee, think they are not like other Men, and having mounted themselves aloft, look down upon all below them, as little and contemptible creeping Things of the Earth ; not considering that the distance betwixt noble and mean Men, is by Fortune, not by Nature, only valuable, as a Defence against base and ignoble Practices, true Greatness consisting in despising not the Persons, but the Errors of the Vulgar.

It is great Prudence in Gentlemen to associate themselves, as near as may be, with Persons of their own Rank and Quality ; for in such kind of Friendships well choien, consists the Fruit and Utility of Conversation.

To keep Company with great Men is very dangerous ; and he that soars in so high a Sphere, runs the Hazard of *Icarus* ; for if great Men love his Company,

pany, it is either for their Pleasure, because he hath Wit, and tickles their Fancy, or he hath Parts which they make use of for their own Advantage; and it is common with them, never to quit or advance such Persons, but still feed them with Hopes, that their Dependance may be wholly upon them; and when such great Men die or are disgraced, their Fall is the Ruin of their Dependants. My Lord Chancellor *Bacon* wittily resembles such (who have Intimacy with and Dependance upon great Men) to Fasting Days, which stand next to Holy Days, but otherwise are the Leanest Days in the Year. The wise Historian tells us, *Nunquam secura cum potente societas*. The Danger of such Acquaintance is well represented in the Fable of the Lion, the Fox, and the As, who keeping Company together, they went one Day a Hunting, where the Lion having taken a great Prey, he bid the As divide the Spoil, who put all into three equal Portions, which so much offended the Lion, that he immediately kill'd the As and devour'd him, and then commanded the Fox to divide, who put all into one great Heap, and set by a little Morfel for himself; and being asked by the
Lion,

Lion, *How he knew so wisely to divide,*
answer'd well, *The Fortune of my Brother*
Afs bath taught me: And if I had
as well understood the Moral of this Fa-
ble when I learnt it at School, as I did
afterwards by dear-bought Experience,
I had not stood so long in the Afs's Place;
but *sero sapiunt Phryges.*

Now there are some Men so far from
this Humour, that they always keep
Company with mean Persons, and those
below them; whereas there can be no
true Friendship, but betwixt Equals:
And therefore wise Men will not only
avoid conversing with such who are
much Superior, but also with those who
are much Inferior, not only in Degree,
but in Parts, for *tanti eris aliis quanti*
tibi fueris; and that our Thoughts and
Designs will be such as our Companions
are, and low Fortunes breed many times
degenerous Purposes, and he that makes
himself an Afs, invites others to ride
him; and it is a very mean Ambition
to be the best in the Company, it be-
ing an experienced Truth, That he who
desires always to be the best Man in
the Company he keeps, shall soon be-
come the worst of any Company he comes
into.

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And yet this Conversation, tho' bad, is not so dangerous as keeping Company with Fools, Folly being no good Tutor to teach Wisdom; neither can a wise Man contract Friendship with a Fool, their Qualities being so far different: For when any Man is taken with another's Conversation, it is a great Argument that they are both of the same Sentiments, but a Fool serves for nothing, but sometimes to divert an ingenious Man, and no other use can be made of him.

But those who love Multitudes are in worse Danger than in keeping Company with Fools; for such live in a Crowd, and a Herd is not Company; the very smell of them offends a wise Man, and where the Crowd of Men is, there is the Crowd of ill Customs; and since 'tis hard to avoid Temptations when they come single, how shall we escape them when they come upon us in a full Body? How can we think of any thing but ill, when we see nothing that's good? Young Gentlemen who are newly come into the World with great Fortunes and ill Breeding, seek great Meetings, and Sin for Company to gain Experience. And therefore 'tis no wonder they are entangled in Debts, and made a Prey to

to Cheaters, and embroiled in Quarrels, so long as they frequent such Conversation. It was in such kind of Company I conceive *Seneca* meant, when he said, *he never went amongst Men but he came home a worse Man than he went out.*

Amongst wise Men, the principal End of Company is Conference, and Conference to be better'd by is not usually met with in Crowds, where Men meet not like Bees to make Honey, but like Wasps, who love to feed in Dung; in such Company you shall hear Men speak neither honestly nor temperately, Slander or Flattery ingrossing all their Discourse, so that no Man can be better'd by their Conversation, the chattering of Magpyes being better Musick than a Consort of such senseless Persons; nay, a Desert is to be preferr'd before such debauch'd Companions, for the wildness of the Place is but uncheerful, whilst the wildness of Lewd Persons is infectious.

Besides these, there is another Conversation, which is that of Women; and tho' young Gentlemen are generally pleas'd to think this a very innocent Diversion, yet none is more dangerous, especially as to the Woman's Part, and proves
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often a more pernicious Calamity than that which thrusts Men into Hospitals: Such Men as spend their whole Time, like *Sardanapalus*, among Women, and yet pretend Chastity, are ridiculous.

If these hear of a beautiful Woman, what Contrivances and Designs do they lay first to see her, and then to corrupt her, and make it their great Business, as well as Trade, for their Agents and Factors to spring such Game; and upon these Occasions, those will liberally Sacrifice all their Time, of which, when any charitable Office would borrow from them some Minutes, they are then such busy Persons, they can by no Means afford it; but to go in quest of such Game, to have the Company of Women is their only Delight and Pastime: But Ladies must take heed of such dangerous Conversation; and especially by how much the more lively they are, they are the more liable to be hurt, as the finest Plants are the soonest nipp'd by the Frost.

The World is a dangerous Stage for Women, where Virtue alone will not defend them, unless join'd with much Prudence; they must have both for their Guard, and not stir without them, and all little enough, for the Enemy being
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abroad, they are sure to be taken if they be stragling. Their Behaviour therefore must ever incline strongly towards the reserved Part, the deceitfulness of the Age we live in having made this Caution highly necessary: For tho' most Men seem indeed Platonick Lovers, and so at first as humble Gallants they are only admitted for Trophies, yet they very often become Conquerors, and from Admirers grow into Masters. Besides, the World is not so great a Fool, as not very well to know, that frequent Visits made to handsome Women, soon grow suspicious, since we know all Men are pleas'd with what is Handsome: *Stimulus carnis*, is a natural Vice in all Men, and Lust is no way better restrain'd, than by keeping far from such Creatures.

He that will avoid committing Sin, must shun the Occasion; for the best Philosopher cannot make me believe, but that every Man naturally is pleas'd with a savory Morfel: And they that make Profession of not staining their Reputation with Spots of Uncleanneſs, ought to shun all that allures thereunto; for it is not only a great piece of Folly, but an infinite rashness worthy to be punished, to make Gun-Powder in a

Smith's Shop, with hopes to make People believe there is no Danger in it.

Some learned Physicians affirm, and Anatomists do also tell us, When a Woman bears Twins, if they be both of the same Sex, they are enwrapped in one Film, but if of different, wise Nature parts them: And if Nature thinks not fit to lodge a Brother and Sister together in so tender an Age, this certainly teaches us, that Persons of different Sexes cannot live safely together; and those who rely upon their Strength and Virtue, in such Occasions, are certainly more Rash than Wise: And those young Ladies who promise to themselves never to go so far, as to be gain'd, nor to admit any but indifferent Favours, such as Civility allows; and after having given Way to more than they should, they find a Precipice, where they expected only Entertainment: And that Woman who will allow her self to go to the utmost Extremity of every Thing that is Lawful, is so very near going farther, that those Gentlemen who lie at watch, will begin to count upon her: For Men are apt to turn every thing that a Woman does to the hopeful Side; but yet few are so Impudent as to make an Ap-

Application, till they see something which they are willing to take for an Encouragement.

And therefore it is much more honourable and safer for Women to prevent such Forwardness, than to go about to cure it; nothing being with more Care to be avoided by them, than such a kind of Civility, which may be mistaken for an Invitation.

I wish many imprudent Ladies had not found the Truth of this, Men often stealing from little Favours to greater, and still carry on their Designs, till many Times they change their Intreaties into Threats, and their Softness into Violence; and then those Women find too late, that true Simplicity is abused, when it deals with falsified; the fear of losing their Reputation, after having given some Advantages which they ought not to have done, hath debauched many Women; and therefore they ought to be very cautious what Men they admit into their Company, and of granting the least Civilities. For as the Sun shining upon a Looking-Glass melting the Quicksilver, presently causeth Spots; so if a young Gentleman do but look upon a beautiful Woman, a Flame of Love presently arises: The ancient Phi-

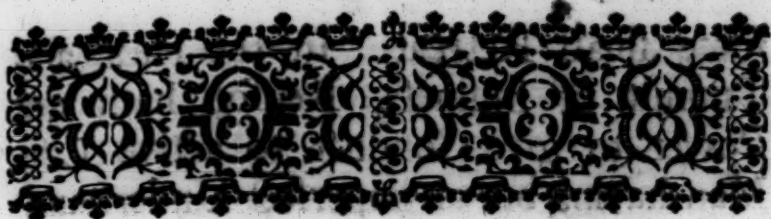
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losophers knew this well, which made them prescribe Absence for the Remedy of Love, that Men should not see their Mistresses: But she knew it better, who said to her Lover, *Discede, discede, a foculo meo, nam si te vel minime, igniculus meus afflaverit, ureris infime.* And what Propertius says is most true:

*Crescit enim assidue spectando cura puella,
Ipse alimenta sibi maxima præbet amor.*

In the last Place, there are some Conversations which are neither good nor bad, profitable for nothing, but only Recreation, Men who seem as it were made for no other Purpose but to divert from serious Affairs: And since even Saints themselves have had their Divertisements, and that all Persons are allow'd some Breathing-time of human Delight, we may therefore safely spare these Men that Leisure, which is set apart for our Conversation, and sometimes lend ourselves to them, that we may be the better enabled to return to our serious Employments.



Of Solitariness and Retirement.

T H E R E is nothing so prejudicial to Action, as to be always in Action; for the Mind, like the Body, is tired by being always in one Posture, to be too serious breaks it, to be too diverting loosens it; so that to unbend our Thoughts, when they are too much stretched by our Cares is not more natural than necessary. The Eye sees not the Objects touching it, but those only remote, and the Understanding continually plunged in Affairs, is not so quick and piercing, as his, who sometimes retires from Publick Employments: Experience teaches us, that the Eye having lost its Quickness by much looking upon the Light, recovers its Vigour again in the Dark; and as the most curious Gravers are obliged to look sometimes upon green Flies, to recollect again their scatter'd Sight; so the Spirit, being weakned and distracted with variety of Affairs, ought to recover its Force in the Privacy of

some small Retreat. In the Heat and Tumult of Business, Reason hath not Power to give Conduct to active Life, Man having but an imperfect Understanding without Meditation, and therefore as Bees must retire to the Honey, after they have gather'd the Matter from Flowers; so it is necessary, that we retire into our selves, to gather the Fruit of our Experience, otherwise we shall be but ill Husbands of the Wealth we have gotten.

Indeed, the Fruit we gather from our many Days of Company is very little, we scatter much in Conversation, we gather but small Profit; but for the few Hours we spend in Retirement and Recollection the Return is very considerable, and the greater Portions of our Time we lay out this way, the more Treasure we lay up for our selves hereafter. This inward Consideration is a large and powerful Study, to such as can seriously Taste and employ themselves therein. It is the Nourishment and Life of our Spirit, and Nature hath favour'd it with this singular Priviledge, that there is nothing we can do so long, neither is there any Thing more easy, more natural, or more our own, than to meditate and entertain our Thoughts.

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Thus, as often as the Mind (interrupted in its Operation by external Objects) would have the Body to be still and quiet, it presently betakes it self to Retirement, when neither Wife nor Children, Kindred nor Business, nor whatsoever else can make any Trouble, are to be seen, all Things being excluded that can disturb: But since this solitary Employment and Entertainment of our selves, is either one of the best or the worst Things we can undertake; it must not therefore be in Vanity, much less in any Thing that is Vicious, but in Study, in profound Knowledge, and in the diligent Culture of our Minds.

He that will withdraw himself, must first prepare to receive himself. It is not Wisdom to let the Spleen govern us, to over-drive Nature is to draw a Blemish upon our Judgment; Men that retire should first examine the Difficulty of the Enterprize, for without this preliminary Prudence, a Man may over-burthen his Shoulders, and soon wade out of Depth. And tho' Solitude promises fair, and is a strong Engagement to a retir'd Person, yet it is to many better in Prospect than in Possession: It is a great Folly to trust our selves if we cannot govern our selves, and he had need be very well assur'd of him-

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himself, that falls into his own Hands, for it often happens, that none are more dangerous than our own; and therefore wisely says the *Spaniard*, *God keep me from my self.*

That Man is much mistaken, who thinks Solitude a Sanctuary against all Vices: It is good against such as proceed from without us, but it hath its inward and spiritual Difficulties. And tho' the Devil be busy in all Places, yet he takes Solitude to be his Ground of Advantage, from whence oft-times he plays his Batteries with most Success. Thus we see he ventur'd to attack our Saviour himself, when he found him in the Wilderness, to shew it is most dangerous for those to be alone that are not Masters of themselves; there being no Security from Danger by running away from the World, especially if Melancholly drives us to Solitude, which makes the Mind uneasy, and ill Thoughts are no Foreign Commodity, but purely of our own Growth, which are most dangerous in Solitude; for many Men, who have well preserv'd themselves in Company, have been lost in Solitude. *Lot* was Chaste even in the City of *Sodom*, yet defiled in his Cave. To an imprudent unadvised Man Solitude is a dangerous

gerous Staff; and it's to be fear'd that whilst he Walks alone, he entertains more and worse Company than himself, Mens Vices many times giving them the Taste of Solitude, making them so much shun Company and seek the more Elbow-Room. For a Man may as well fail alone as in Company, there are ways for it, until such time that he hath fram'd himself such, as to become *Sibi Theatrum*, that he so much respects his Reason and fears his Conscience, that he cannot with Shame stumble or trip in their Presence, that he dare not halt before himself, but bears a kind of Reverence and Respect unto himself, which next to Religion is the chiefest Bridle against all Vice. Cicero in this Case gives an excellent Direction, *Observentur species honestæ animo*: Let honest Ideas still represent themselves before our Mind. Let us, says Seneca, represent Cato, Phocion, and Aristides, to our Imagination, (in whose Presence even Fools would hide their Faults) and establish them as Comptrollers of all our Actions.

It is certainly a rare Thing, *Ut satis se quisque vereatur*; That every Man should sufficiently stand in awe of himself: We should win so much upon our selves,

selves, as to be able in good earnest, and willingly to be left alone, to quit the World if need be, to dwell and delight in our selves: We must break those Bonds asunder that fasten and bind us to each other; and not so tie our selves to the Things of this World, that our Felicity depend upon them, but reserve a Store-house for our selves, (what need soever happen) wherein we may secure and establish our true Contentment and principal Retreat. This Store-house is a wise Man's Mind, which moves and turns within it self, and is well contented to keep it self Company, and enjoy it self: and when the World frowns upon us, and that we are barren of Employments, we ought then to betake our selves to the secret Improver of Minds, Contemplation, thereby adorning our House within, and make it ready, if for Guests that is for Business, and if they come not 'tis no matter, it will be the better for us to live in. Thus we must bring home our Cogitations to our selves, that our Contentment may depend upon what is within us, neither seeking nor disdaining Employment, but cheerfully go on, either with or without it, with a calm and undisturbed Mind. For this World is a Comedy,

Comedy, where every Man acts that Part which Providence hath assigned him; and as it is esteemed more noble to look on than to act, so there is no securer Box from which to behold it, than a safe Retreat, it being easier to feel than express the Pleasure that may be taken in standing aloof off, and in contemplating the Reelings of the Multitude upon the Stage of this World.

There is no Counsel more proper for Men than the Philosopher's, *Tecum habitare*, to dwell at Home, and not to suffer any Thing to steal us away from our selves; there is neither Profit nor Pleasure worth so much, that we should go abroad to seek it. Even amongst *Pagans* the wisest look'd upon the Things of this World as Lumber rather than Furniture, as Things which they needed not, and retired within their own Breasts, which they call'd their Home, their to enjoy Virtue their only Good: And many of the *Epicurean* Sect (who propos'd to themselves no other End but their own Contentment) did bereave themselves of all sensual Delights, and condemn'd the Glory and Pomp of all worldly Wealth and Greatness, for the only Pleasure of Contemplation. But now a wise Christian, that may within his own Breast enjoy

enjoy both Virtue and God himself, hath much higher Advantage, and more Reason to keep within that Home, and to look upon Things without with an indifferent Eye. That Man therefore forgets his Origin and his Dignity, that puts his Soul out of Profession of her self, by running perpetually after Hopes that fly from him; whereas he should abandon the Pleasures of this Life, and bid adieu to all manner of Vanities, shunning all Passions that may any way impeach the Tranquility either of Mind or Body, making God the only Object of his Contemplation: He that thus retires, draws no Man's Envy upon him, he reigns by himself, and all the Pomp which Greatness draws after it, is not comparable to that which he enjoys in Secret; for as that Man must needs be accounted most Happy, that is likest unto God; so Man's chiefest Happiness must needs consist in the Contemplation of his Divine Majesty and of his Works: And indeed, nothing but the Supports of Religion, and a Spiritual Retreat, upon that sole Account, can make a Man fit to entertain himself, withdrawing upon the Score of Religion. Thus to shut up the Prospect of this World, that we may take the better View of the other, is a prudent

dent Precaution: Thus we untwist our Affections, and slide off from the World, before the World slips from us; thus to retire is the best Improvement of Solitude, and to be thus Alone is the way to bring us to the most desirable Company.

To Retire for Quiet and Thinking is commendable, *Amici fures Temporis*, says the Lord Bacon. Conversation is a Thief that steals away a great Part of our Time, and usually stuffs our Memory with Rubbish; Solitude is a great Relief in such Cases, and wise Men are glad to get clear of the Crowd for fresh Air and Breathing. It is not Noise and Flashes, Thunder and Lightning, that make fair Days, but it is the Sun's casting a clear and pleasing Light, with gentle Gales: So a Life led in sweet Tranquility (which is the work of Reason) is much preferable before all the great Successes which the World admires, and which are nothing but the Extravagancies of Fortune: In Retirement, we taste the sweet of a quiet Repose, and entertain our selves with Freedom; nay, we live more in two Days of Retreat, and we are more sensible of what Life is, than in two Years full of Business and Trouble, and we see greater Things in
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Retirement than abroad in the World; For what do we see great in the World, unless it be perhaps an Army, the Siege of a Town, or the Court of a Prince? We are quickly accustom'd to these, which only appear great to us at the first Sight. But in Retirement, we look upon the different Works of Nature, the Sun rising and setting, a still Night, and those Planets which so magnificently roll over our Heads, which we continually admire. It is observ'd by Learned Physicians, that those who dwell farthest from the Sun, (if in any convenient Distance) have longer Life, better Appetites, Digestion and Growth, than others who dwell not so remote from the Heats thereof: Such Advantages, and much greater, have their Minds, who are well remov'd from the Scorching, the Dazzlings and Exhaling of the World's Glory, into a private Retirement; Whereas those who live in the Throng of Business and Company, their Minds lose their Rest and Tranquility, and many Times after a Man hath lost his Rest, he loseth his Labour also.

It is a great Misery for a Man never to be his own; too much Acquaintance makes us Strangers to our selves; the more we converse with Men, the less we

we converse with God, and the Content which we may expect by our Conversation with Men, is lost by too much Conversation. I know Society is one of those Satisfactions which are reckon'd amongst the Pleasures of the first Magnitude in this Life; but when we consider that the Advantage of Society consists not in seeing each other, but in rational Conversation, it will appear, that Solitude is much more Satisfactory; for what Pleasure can be receiv'd in talking of new Fashions, of great Purchases, of Advancement or Ruin of Favourites, Victories, or Defeats of stranger Princes and Armies, some of which are the usual Subject of ordinary Conversation; and in Courts and great Cities, Men neither seek nor find any other Divertisement, than visiting each other, reviewing their Habits, talking of new Fashions, or of the Weather, or some such pitiful Stuffs; and if Men discourse upon more serious Subjects, they are sure to be contradicted, which often causes Quarrels. Besides, in these Rencounters, Men are tempted to betray their Ignorance, or their Malice, in either of which they are esteemed Blockheads or Quarrelsome: And if we converse with those who speak with more Address than

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our selves, we repine at our own Dullness, and envy their Acuteness; and we converse with Duller than our selves, we are soon weary, and fret at our being in ill Company: And if by chance we accompany our Equals, then we are upon our Guard, to catch all Advantages, that we may be thought more knowing; and we are so interested in this Point of Honour, that such Conversation rather vexes than recreates, and many Persons make themselves chafe upon these Occasions, whom we highly valued if we had frequented them less.

That Man who dwells upon himself and is always conversant with himself rests in his true and proper Center; and therefore he that hath learnt Wisdom from the Folly of others, and the Miscalriages of his own Actions, will be content to see the Crowd afar off, and not any more thrust into it, but retire within himself: It is true indeed, there is no Place but there are means in it to do well or ill; a Man may live alone in the Throng of a Palace, but if he may chuse, he will avoid the Sight of it: If need require, he will endure the Court, but if he may have his Liberty, he will be alone; for Contagion

is catching in a Throng, and a Man must either imitate the Vicious or hate them, and both are dangerous: He that is careful to avoid Occasions, starves his Sin; those are rare Men that can live in the midst of Temptations and not fall: *Nemo diu tutus periculo proximus, & que licita, sunt evitanda, propter vicinitatem illiciti.*

We have never greater Cause to consult our best Wits, what we are to do, and how we are to carry our selves, than when Preferment or Publick Employments are offered us. It was no idle Question asked by an eminent Man, Whether if great Places or Employments were offered us, we should refuse or admit them? Wherein the divers Abilities of Men are to be considered: He that hath Strength and Wisdom to manage such Places may receive them; but he that would live quietly ought not to entangle himself with more than he can manage; let him try, *Quid ferre recusent, quid valeant Humeri*; the strong and virtuous Man may possibly meet and encounter Temptations with Advantage, which the more cautelous will avoid; and in one of these two Ranks every good Man is found; and we may well compare them to *Hannibal* and *Fabius*,

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the first always calling for Battle, the other evermore declining it.

There are indeed several Degrees of Solitude, and those wisely retire, who being harrassed with the Fatigues of a Publick Life, foreseeing ill Weather, are willing to put into Port, when keeping out at Sea might endanger the Vessel: When the Winds go cross, 'tis Prudence to furl the Sails: Thus that great Prince *Charles V.* when he found his Success began to fail him, he presently withdrew.

To be able to check our Enemy, to encounter Occasions, to act our Part upon the common Stage of this Life, and yet to keep our selves Upright, this is indeed truly to live; but to avoid Occasions, to overcome the World by retiring from it, argues a wise, tho' in the World's Opinion, a weak and fainting Spirit, who think there is no greater Argument of Imperfection in a good Man, *Quàm non posse pati solem, non multitudinem*, not to be able to appear in Publick without Offence, and who can only live to God and himself, *Utilis ipsi sibi, fortassis inutilis orbi*: Tho' this indeed be the weaker Side, yet certainly it is the safer, rather than by an improvident Fool-hardiness, to thrust

thrust our selves upon Occasions, which we are unable to manage without Offence.

There is not amongst Men a greater or more frequent Error committed than in this Kind; for in most Things of this World, Men that have no Skill in them, will be content to acknowledge their Ignorance, to give Place to better Experience, and will advise and consult with every one in their proper Mystery; but let Offer be made of Places of Honour, Money or Preferment, no Man will excuse himself, or acknowledge his Ignorance or Weakness to manage them; whereas our Errors are no where so dangerous, as in the unskilful managing of these Things; and therefore it is better to be cautious and wary, than strong and hardy: *Malo cautior esse quam fortior, fortis saepe captus est, cautus rarissime*: We read in Holy Scripture of a Race of Men so much greater in Bulk than ordinary, that Men of common Size seem'd but as Grasshoppers to them; yet we find the little Men were always too hard for them, and drove them out; because the Giants depended upon the Opinion of their Strength and Hardiness, the others upon their wary Wit and Policy; and it commonly happens so in this World,

and we shall find that far more have perished by unadvisedly venturing upon the Things of this World, than by sober and discreet Retiring.

But many Men over-rate themselves, whose Expectations being great, when they are not caress'd and humour'd in their Folly, they presently grow chagrin and sick of the World, and fall into a Fit of Retirement and Melancholly, and will keep no longer Company with any. These Men, like Children when cross'd, grow sullen in a Corner; but he that thus shuns Company and retreats, retires only like a Beast to his Den.

We have seen many Examples, where Greatness hath ruin'd several Persons, who liv'd with much Honour and Reputation before. *Nero, Tiberius*, and some others, enjoy'd the Repute of Noble Souls before the mounting the Imperial Throne, which brought them new Vices with their Honour, and made them as much surpass others in their Debauches, as they did in their Power; so that Publick Employment is scarce to be wished for, seeing Men are tempted thereby to commit the greatest Crimes. *Moses*, who was the meekest of Men, whilst he lived in the Wilderness; yet when Providence advanced him, he so highly

highly offended God, that all his former Services could not obtain the Liberty of his entring into the Land of *Canaan*.

And tho' at the Creation God found it not good for Man to be alone, and therefore gave him a Companion; yet to shew the Hazard of being in Company, even *Adam* could not live one Day in it, and be Innocent; for the first News we hear of him after *Eve* was associate with him, is, that he had forfeited his Native Purity.

When God intended to converse with *Moses*, he call'd him from the populous Camp to the Top of Mount *Sinai*; and Christ did not disclose the Glories of his Transfiguration at *Jerusalem*, but on the Top of the Mount of *Olives*: When God did discipline his beloved, yet rebellious People of *Israel*, he chose first the Wilderness, then the two Captivities to be his School.

History tells us of many, who out of their Skill and Strength have given free Entertainment to the World, and have made large use of it, in all ways of Greatness and Expence, when their Time and Hour came, would rather have gone out of some poor Cottage, than out of a Princely Palace, and lived with no

Noise in the World, that so they might have died in Peace: *Charles V.* the Prince of *Parma*, and fundry others, tho' they liv'd in all Pomp and State, yet at their Death they desired to be buried in a Capuchin's Habit; and if they thought, to die in a State of perfect Sequestration from the World was so precious, how much more available had it been to live in it? For thus to die, not having thus liv'd, is nothing else but to give Sentence against their own Life; for we shall not appear before God as we died, but as we liv'd; to profess Desertion of the World at one's Death, as most do, is only to be buried in a Capuchin's Hood.

It was a notable Answer given by the Philosopher to *Pyrrhus*, who when he told him, *He would Conquer Greece, then Rome, and so all the World: Cyneas* ask'd him, *Why he would give himself so much Trouble;* to which *Pyrrhus* answer'd, *he would do it, that he might afterwards live happily and merrily with his Friends;* but *Cyneas* reply'd sharply, *He might live so presently, and not take so much Pains for it.*

Men that are still busied in Publick Affairs, whose Mercurial Genius inclines them to a restless Life, they (like *Moses* on *Pisgab*) see Retirement, their Land of *Canaan* afar off, but without Hopes of Enjoyment : And we have seen some great Men, who would never leave Employments till outed of them, like Whales and other great Fishes that never come on Shoar till they are wounded, and then these Men have prais'd Retirement, not to satisfy their Reason, but their Revenge ; yet even this Proceeding of theirs commends Retirement, since even the distressed expect a Protection there, for Distress makes Men run where they may expect Help : And certainly those, who after possessing great Places in Courts, have been unexpectedly disgraced, will be more really convinced of its Slipperiness, than such as never found the Effects of so much Revolution: Nay, those Men who seek greedily after Publick Employments, pretend thereby a Design for Solitude. Thus Merchants seek about the World, that they may gain so much as may afford them the Conveniency of a Retirement : And Soldiers have often nothing to sweeten their Anxieties, but the remote Prospect of some good Garrison for a Retreat. And *Cesar*
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himself said, *Aliquando mihi licebit mihi vivere*, *He would have his spare Hours*, esteeming that Part of his Life to belong to others, which was spent on other Mens Employments.

Now the wonder is, that the same Impulse which hurries Men to desire to be Great that they may be Masters, should not with far more Reason carry them to be Solitary, where they are free from those Necessities, and have none to obey but God and Nature, Masters who command us nothing but what were fit for us to do, though we were not commanded.

This Consideration hath made many Holy Fathers retire into Desarts (where they scarce had any other Nourishment but their own Juice, nor any other Company but God) that they might tend the Work of their Salvation without Disturbance: There they did as it were descend into their Sepulchres by deep and holy Meditation; and from those Hermitages enriched the Treasure of the Church, with their Divine Works, confuting Gain-sayers, and increasing the Stock of Holy Learning.

But it hath not been unusual for some Men to retire from the World, and yet look back at it, as *Lot's Wife* at *Sodom*,
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and oftentimes to keep their Hearts in it : Thus did many of the Philosophers who left the World in Effect, but not in Affection ; for in their Retirements they had nothing but their Arms and Legs out of the Throng, their Minds and Intents were still engaged, and they only went back that they might leap the better, and with a stronger Motion make a nimbler Offer again into the World : These Men did not take the right Way, they thought they had totally taken leave of all Business, that they might live at more Leisure and greater Ease ; but they mistook themselves, and only exchanged one Employment for another ; for though they had shaken off the Court and Publick Employments, they had not taken leave of the principal Vexations of Life, nor had discharged themselves nor their Minds of the Burthens which oppressed them ; they had not so ordered it, that their Contentment depended wholly upon themselves, and that they could live alone in good Earnest, and at Ease : However, Men may converse with the World, and yet leave it ; we may find Retiredness in the greatest Cities ; we may pass thro' a Crowd and not mingle with it ; and we may enjoy ourselves in a multitude of unknown Persons,

sons, as if they were the Personages of an *Arras* Hanging.

Every Ship that sails must needs have some Part of the Ship under Water; every Man that lives in this World must have some of his Labours spent upon the World; but as that part of the Ship by which a Man sails is above the Water, so that part of us which is above the Earth, we must remove it from the World. Thus some who have attain'd to that Sublimity of Mind, as to be above all worldly Cares, tho' they meddle with the World as being of the World, yet they do it so safely, that they cleave not to it, nor are astonish'd to leave it.

Thus many great Men, after the Fruition of all Earthly Honours, have much preferr'd Solitude: As *Snatocopias* King of *Bohemia*, after the Loss of a Battle against the Emperor *Arnold*, he retired into a Desert, where having lived several Years with three poor Hermits, he at his Death told them, *There was no Greatness preferrable to the Tranquility of that Solitude he had enjoy'd with them, which he esteem'd as true Happiness; whereas that Life he had led upon his Throne deserv'd more the Title of Death than Life: And Simi-*
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lis a great General to the Emperor *Adrian*, after all his Honours and Preferments, retir'd into the Country for seven Years before his Death, and caus'd this Epitaph to be written upon his Tomb: *Here lies Similis of a very great Age, who yet lived but seven Years*; relating only to the Time of his Retirement.

It was nobly observ'd by that great Emperor *Marcus Aurelius*, who was also a Philosopher, That a Weaver or a Cobler would willingly sequester themselves from all Company, that they might prosecute their several Trades; and yet Man cannot retire himself that he may admire the Creation, and exercise his own Soul, which is the proper Trade of a rational Creature, and of a true Philosopher: And since Gain can prevail so far with Men, as to make them renounce Society, and esteem Company an idle Folly, why should not we reflect upon the great Advantages of Retirement, both as to Morality and Devotion, which are much preferable to those Things which are in themselves but Trifles if not Burthens. For certainly Solitude hath more Pleasures in it, than any Publick Employment, for it drives us into Contemplation, which is so charming,

ing, that it may rather be said to ravish than please, committing so open a Rupture upon our Souls, that it puts them almost into a state of Separation.

Thus the old Hermits, Members of the Catholick Church, are often remarked for being as far transported out of themselves, as they had formerly transported themselves out of the World: And even amongst the Heathens, we find *Pythagoras* almost distracted with the Satisfaction he conceiv'd in finding out his Demonstrations: And *Pliny* was so delighted with the Pleasure of contemplating the Rarities of the Mountain *Vesuvius*, as for farther Inquiry he approach'd so near, that he lost himself in the Flames of it.

What Calmness and Contentment did *Archimedes* shew in the midst of the Ruins of *Syracuse*, being so pleas'd with his Demonstration, and so busy about his Knowledge and Contemplation, as he heard not the Noise and Clamours of the Enemy, and could not spare so much Time from his Intendment, as to ask Life from the rude Conquerors, when he was interrupted and kill'd by them. Here was a Tranquillity which look'd gloriously through Danger and Death: It is not Pomp and shining Robes that
give

give Grace to the Body, but it is the Mind within the Body.

Socrates, that great Master of Breeding, tells us, That young Men should be instructed, Men in the Flower of their Age exercis'd in well-doing; but old Men should withdraw themselves, and retire from all worldly Affairs: It being no less than highly necessary, that a space of Time should be interpos'd, between the Business of Life, and the Day of Death, that when they come to leave the World, they may have nothing else to do but to Die. And who-soever hath laid up in his Mind wherewith to entertain himself in the Shadow and Retirement of his Age, will look upon that temperate Climate of his Time as the most sweetned and digested part of his whole Life, free from the Hurryings of all the other, he then treats himself with the best Company, that of his own Thoughts and Observations; and with the Philosopher, when others are sorry he is grown Old, he is only sorry that he was ever Young. Indeed, when Decrepidness kills Experience, when Age acts the Prologue to Death, and draws the Curtains before our Senses, it is then high time to give that Life leave to think only of Death, and to prepare for its

last Journey: For it is a Right and Justice Men owe to themselves, who have given their most active and flourishing Age to the World, to give their declining Age to Solitude and Retirement, and since they have liv'd long enough for others, they ought to give the Remainder of their Lives to themselves to call in these Thoughts and Intentions; and since God gives them leisure to prepare for and order their Remove, they ought to make themselves ready, to disintangle themselves from their worldly Engagements, and since they have hitherto liv'd Swimming and Floating, they should come now, and Die in the Harbour; it being but reasonable for that Man to shake off Society that can bring nothing to it; and that cannot Lend, let him take heed of Borrowing; and when our Forces fail us, it is then a part of Prudence, as well as Safety, to retire. But for Men in the Strength of their Manly Vigour, that are endowed with publick Abilities, and excellent Ornaments, the use whereof is only in Society, for such to retire for their Ease, or Idleness, and to do good to none but themselves, is very injurious to the Publick, and resists not only Reason but Goodness, both which join in guiding

ding as to common Good. A Man of excellent Parts, who thus retires under Pretence of meditating, and leaves no Fruit of his Meditations to the World, is like the River of *Jordan*, whose fair and quick Water is lost in the Lake of *Sodom*, call'd the *Dead Sea*. This is to Die living, to lose the Quickness of the Mind in the Gulph of unprofitable Idleness; it is indeed leaving the World in the worse Sense, for it is a forsaking Mankind, and denying to Society that Service and Duty which we owe it.

For if Men of publick Employments and Professions should husband all their Time so thriftily, as not to give any Part thereof to Business, but bestow it all in Retiredness, yet even thereby they would contract a Guiltiness: As the Eagle were very unnatural, if (because she is able to do it) she should pearch a whole Day upon a Tree, staring in Contemplation of the Glory and Majesty of the Sun, and in the mean time let her young Eagles starve in their Nest.

Both ancient and modern Histories have furnish'd us with Examples of some Kings, who have willingly resign'd their Kingdoms, and deposed themselves; but whether they did this meerly out of a Desire to live retiredly, or to satisfy
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their Sons being arrived at Years fitting to Rule, that so they might see the Succession settled in their own Blood, or to shun the Tumults of Rebellion, or out of Fear of some potent Enemy, or unaptness of Government, are great Questions left as yet undecided in the World. But if any Prince hath done so gallant an Action, (which is so strongly withstood by human Nature) as to renounce a Kingdom, by Virtue of a Soul enamoured of that Felicity which is enjoy'd in a private Life, and that out of a well-disposed Mind he preferr'd the Peace of Retirement before the Hazards and Trouble of Reining, and that divested himself of his prosperous earthly Condition, purely that he might be Happy, that Prince was not only truly Wise, but was undoubtedly more bound to God for giving him that Power, and that Performance, than for making him a King. But that King who shrunk under the weight of Government, where Men ought to shew the greatest Worth, or hath renounced his Kingdom out of poorness of Spirit, that Prince is much to be blamed, for that the true Moderation of Soul is seen in gallantly undergoing Cases of Adversity, and not in losing a Man's self in Prosperity.

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Indeed, prudent Men, that know themselves not able to withstand the Temptations of the World, will wisely and timely retire from it: Stags, when they find themselves too fat, are said to retire for safety to the Woods and Thickets, knowing that being burthen'd with their own Weight, they are not able to run if they should be hunted; which, if true, shews a great Providence in Nature. And if we seriously consider, we shall find that Multitude and Abundance are far more troublesome, than Solitariness and Want; in Abstinence, there is only need of one Duty, but in the conduct and use of many Things divers Duties are required. Thus the Calling of a King or Prelate, is far more difficult than that of a Monk or Hermit, and the Sociable Life is much harder than the Solitary, by how much it is more easy for a Man to live altogether without a Wife, than in all Points duly to live and maintain himself with her; and therefore Sir *Thomas Overbury*, a very ingenious Man, was us'd to say, *That next to no Wife, a good Wife was best*: For he that hath Wife and Children, Servants, Estate, and Business, hath without comparison a more troublesome Task, than he that

I 2 hath

hath none of all these, and hath only to do with himself: *Facilius est domi latere, quam foris se posse sufficienter custodire*: And therefore speculative judicious Men do discreetly and piously, that leave the Employments of the World which require the whole Man, to give themselves some Intervals to the Office of Men, as they are Men and Christians.

Such Retreats as these are most commendable, where Men sequester themselves from the Troubles of the World, that they may the better *vacare Deo & studiis*: For thus they do more good living out of the World than in it; neither do such Men as these embrace Solitude out of meanness of Spirit, or for weakness of Parts, as not fit to attain Greatness, or not able to bear with the World, but they do it purely, that they may arrive at that Happiness which is usually enjoy'd in a retired virtuous Life.

History affords us many Examples of Men, who have known how to compass the Prime Places and Supreme Dignities both in Church and State, who have had the Acquisition of Wealth and Greatness in their Power, though not in their Aim, and who have with much

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Honour relinquish'd Riches to embrace Poverty, and to enjoy Solitariness and Retirement, having voluntarily left the most gainful and weighty Employments, and after a full Fruition of all earthly Happiness and Pleasure, have taken a solemn Leave of the World, whilst yet Fortune smil'd upon them. A great Example in this kind, was *Quintus Mutius Posthumus*, that Noble Roman, who having been taken from the Plow to be Consul, after he had govern'd that People and conquer'd their Enemies, he return'd to his former Employment; and being ready to leave the Senate, he called for his Balance, and by putting the Fasces, the Mark of his Office or Authority in one Scale, and his Plow in the other, did let the Senators see, those Imperial Ensigns were far the lighter, and so took his leave of the Senate, and return'd to his Plow. Such Men as these are truly Happy, who have left Cares and Troubles for Calmness and Quiet, they possess a Happiness, which Kings can neither keep themselves, nor suffer amongst their Neighbours: These are so far from complaining of the World, that they are content to forget it, and are resolved neither to have War nor Commerce with it, having

I 3 founded

founded a Retreat to all their Passions, as well the pleasing, as the troublesome.

But we shall find few Men that will be content to do this Thing seriously, sudden Wishes and indeliberate Proffers and Attempts to renounce the World are but rash Pangs of seeming Mortifications. There are not many that will be content with a mean Estate, that will neglect Wealth and Abundance, and desire God not to heap too much upon them, but to abate of his Portion: There are but few that will with *Daniel* refuse the King's Delicacies, and feed upon Pulse, and with the great *St. Paul* take Pleasure in Necessities: Many indeed will tell us, they are resolved to quit the World both in Mind and Body, but Custom is a Thing we often fall into by flying it, and we shall not unfrequently hear Men swear they will not swear. I verily believe many of our Loyal Countrymen have had so sad Experience of this World, and do so little desire to learn that which they are ignorant of therein, that they would be very glad to forget what they already know of it, and do really wish they were like some of those Hermits, that enquir'd how Cities were made, and what kind of Thing

Thing a King or a Commonwealth was?

There is no Voice sounds better in a sober Man's Ears, than that which cry'd to *Arsenius, Fuge, sede, tace*; which counsels Men to give themselves Satisfaction by their quiet retiring: *Crede mihi qui bene latuit, bene vixit*, said a wise Man: But yet wheresoever we are, or in what Condition soever, (if we can but tell our selves what and where we would be) we may make any Place or State happy to us: For we are so composed, that if Abundance or Glory scorch or melt us, we have an earthly Cave (our Bodies) to go into by Consideration, and cool our selves; and if we be frozen and contracted with lower and dark Fortunes, we have within us a Torch, a Soul brighter and warmer than any without; we are therefore our own Umbrella's, and our own Suns.

But as all Shadows are of one Colour, if we respect the Body from which they are cast; so all Retirings into a shadowy Life, are alike from all Causes; only the Employments, and that upon which we bestow our Time, gives it the Tincture and the Beauty. Thus our Shadows upon Clay will be dirty, and in a Garden green and flowry; so in our

Retirements, if we only converse with Earth, we shall be like it, that is, unlike our selves: But if we be engaged in more refined and intellectual Entertainments, we shall be something more than our selves, that is, that this narrow Circumference of Earth speaks us, the Soul being always like the Object of its Delight and Converse; and therefore well says the Roman Orator, *Erigimur & latiores fieri videmur, humana dispicimus contemplantésque supera & celestia, hæc nostra ut exigua & minima contemnuntur.*

However, it is not enough to be only separated from the Converse of People; for tho' we have freed our selves from the Court and from the Market, yet we are not thereby free from the principal Torments of our Life; tho' we change Places never so often, yet may our Vices follow us even into immured Cloisters: The hollow Rocks, the wearing Hair-Shirts, and continual Fasting, rid us not always from them, for a Holy Habit cleanses not a foul Soul. And as *Socrates* being ask'd, *Why one who had been long abroad, had not more improv'd himself by Travel,* answer'd well, *because he had not left himself behind him when he went to Travel:*

So

So before a Man leaves the World, if he do not first discharge both himself and his Mind from the Burthen that presses her, Retiring will but stir it the more, and press it the Harder, as a sick Man takes more Hurt than good by changing Place: It is but settling an Evil instead of removing it, and if we cast back a kind Look upon what we have left behind, we still carry our Fetters along with us, and are not at Liberty. We ought therefore first to recover our selves from our selves, for without managing our Superior Part, all the Pains taken about the Inferior is to no purpose: And he that only changes his Cloth of Gold for a Monk's Habit, and his *Point de Venice* for a Demy Collar, shall without doubt be a Loser by the Bargain: It is indeed no such easy Matter, as many Men believe, to make a safe Retreat from the World, to truss up our Baggage, and bid our Company farewell: This is a Burthen which few Men can take up handsomely: For a Man to anticipate the Accidents of Fortune, to deprive himself of his present Advantages, is an Action of extream Difficulty, as well as of an extraordinary Virtue.

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But tho' the doing these Things seem very severe to our worldly Imaginations, and to those who never had Experience in themselves of this noblest Operation of the Soul; yet doth this retiring produce so great Effects, and carries with it such spiritual Charms and Delights, that should good Fortune herself come in Person to find them out, who are thus withdrawn, to invite them again into the World, yet would they shut their Doors against her; and tho' she should tell her Name, she should not be admitted. The Religious retir'd Man is an inverted Pyramid, Earth hath but the least Point of it; A Soul that dwells in Heaven will not dabble in this impure Mud, or stoop to be a Copartner in the Delights of the Creatures, that have nothing but Beast in them; and tho' it be necessitated by its relation to Flesh to a terrestrial Converse, yet it is like the Sun without contaminating its Beams.

Thus Religious Persons, when they come abroad into the World, partake not of any worldly Humour, they can safely look upon the Throng, and (more truly than *Socrates* at the *Olympian Games*) give God Thanks, that he hath made them not to need those many Things

Things which others so vainly and violently pursue: Their rais'd Contemplations enlarge and enoble their Spirits, and infinitely advance them above the ordinary Level; such Souls as these (that were only lent the Earth, to shew the World their Folly in admiring it) possess Delights which in a manner anticipate Immortality, and (tho' at an humble distance) resemble the Joys above, they receiving here some Anticipations of immortal Delights, as Pledges of their eternal Rewards; for there want not Examples of some, who have had their Souls elevated to such a height of intellectual Contemplation, that God hath made them as it were, in some measure, Patterns of the Happiness of the Life to come, which he hath sometimes vouchsafed to shew us here below, to make us in Love with the Piece above in Heaven.

This Divine Contemplation is, *promus & condus cæli & situla gratia*; it opens to us all the Treasures of Heaven; this remedies all our Sorrows, settles and composes all our Distractions, and ravishes our Spirits with unspeakable Delights; to which purpose St. *Francis de Sales* says most Divinely; *We see the Restraints which Religious Persons put upon*

on themselves, we discern their outward Bitterness, but we are not able to apprehend their inward Sweetness and Delight; the very Fire and Flames were to the Martyrs Flowers and Perfumes.

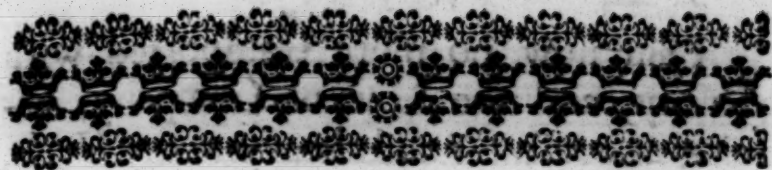
How injurious a Scandal is it therefore, which we are apt to cast upon Religious Persons, representing them with angry and stoical Countenances, and defaming them with melancholy and unfociable Humours, believing Retirement to be a State, wherein the Soul contracts a Rust, which cankers its own Substance, and makes it unpleasant to others: Whereas our Saviour assures us, there is no Life so pleasant and happy; and tho' he himself is said never to have Laughed, yet his Countenance is said ever to have been Smiling, and in full Condemnation of morose Humours, it was prophesied of him, *Quod non esset tristis* in his Conversation.

It is indeed an ill way of judging, That Men cannot have Piety in their Hearts without Austerity in their Looks, (a Virtue stuck with Bristles is too rough, when adorn'd with Flowers it will be willingly entertain'd) a cloudy discontented Face is not the only, or best sign of Devotion, very merry Men have been very holy and devout Men: No
Man

Man loves to see such Religious, whose Thorn he is afraid will scratch him; for Christian Philosophy hath nothing in common with the Cynick; this disguiseth, the other reforms; the one composes the Countenance, the other regulates the Spirit; the truly Religious are Austere to none but themselves, their Thorns prick no body else; it being a Vulgar Error to believe, that those which retire with the greatest Strictness should not have their Diversions; all the Hours of their Lives are not equally Serious, neither are all their Sayings, Sermons; it being a Right most proper to them of all others, to have this *Olium latitiae*, this Balm of their Lives, this spiritual Alacrity, which does even dignify their Service to God: For these seek it where it is to be found, and therefore we may be sure they gather it from the right Tree, it being the only Fruit of a good Conscience; and since that is to them a continual Feast, there is no Reason but they should be merry at it: This is the Substance of all their Actions, and their constant Triumph, having this they want nothing, *Quamvis ipsis nihil est, nihil deest*: All their Treasures lies in the Temple of
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Wisdom, which they do so well improve, that they become living Books to them that converse with them, illustrating their Minds without Prejudice to their Sight, their Instructions having much more of Power and Life, than Reading can possibly be capable of.





Of St. MARY MAGDALEN'S
*Life and Conversion; with some
Reflections upon the Conversion
of the good Thief.*



BEING in a Place and Season where every Thing begins to bud, I must do so to, and vent some of my Thoughts; tho' perhaps, as all other Buds are yet without Taste or Virtue, these Lines may be also dull and insipid; and tho' the Pleasantry of the Season invites me, it does not much please me, since I see every Thing refreshes, but I wither and grow Older, but no better, my Strength diminishes, and my Load grows heavier.

There are certain Rules for the Body's Infirmities, which if rightly observ'd will effect their Cure; but for the Diseases of the Mind, there is no Rule, for our own Taste and Apprehension, which should be the Judge, is the Disease it self.

I am now no more transported with Jollity, and the Love of Company, having at present Loads heavy at my Heels, which bring to my Thoughts my ill Fortune, my old Age, the Duties of a Man, of a Subject, of a Husband, of a Father, with all the Incumbrances of a numerous Family; these Thoughts deject me into Sadness and Melancholy, and from thence into a serious Contemplation of the Troubles and Miseries of this Mortal Life; which have farther induced me, in this Time of Solemn Devotion, to entertain my Thoughts upon some Divine Subject, the better to compose my Mind and submit my Will to the Orders of Divine Providence.

I know well, as no Beauty, so no Discourse hath all Voices, even in the worst Faces some Eyes see Features that please, in the best some others see Lines they like not; some out of Affection may Plat a Lawrel for that Head, on which others in their Opinion would bestow a Thistle, which may perhaps be my Fate: However, I am not ambitious to hang the Ivy-Garland at my Door, least I should seem like those Hosts that us'd to meet their Guests upon the Way, and promise before-hand a fair and ample Entertainment; let it please my Reader
rather

rather to see and allow his Cheer, and then according to his own Palate he may digest or relish the Cookery.

I doubt not but many an accurate Quill on the Wing of Contemplation hath already taken a high Flight upon this Subject; my only Plea shall be, He that cannot Soar like the Eagle, may be allowed to Flutter like the Sparrow.

The Scripture is every where full of Variety, like a Garment of several Colours, and upon the same Loom of Holy Writ, divers Workmen may according to their several Fancies draw out some curious Threads of Observation; and that Brain is very unhappy that meets not with some traverse of Discourse more than it hath borrow'd from another's Pen; yet I will not contemn the Judgment of the Wise, nor refuse to learn from any Instructor. I never read but of one foolish Cock that refused a Pearl tho' found on a Dunghil:

*Mens assueta operi per mille volumina
solers
Ambulat, atque suos aliquid se ponit
in usus.*

The laborious BEE is the Emblem of a working Brain, which Creature is set
K before

before us for a Copy of Industry ; it is not always droning upon one Flower, but throws her light airy Body upon a second, so to a third, till her Thighs are loaded with a large Collection. It is no less indeed than a wonder, that of almost the Shadow rather than the Substance of so very small a living Creature, Nature hath made so incomparable a Thing. I had rather imitate this laborious Insect, than challenge to my self *Arachne's* Motto, *Mihi soli debeo*, I had rather bind up in this Posy, some choice Flowers, which I have here and there chosen and cull'd from the Gardens of several Authors, than boast my self with that little *Arabian*, that I have eviscerated my self, and spun a Web out of my own Bowels.

Having therefore imposed this Task upon my self, and finding nothing more particularly described in the New Testament, than several remarkable Passages of the happy *St. Mary Magdalen*, I have thereupon thought fit to make her the principal Subject of this Discourse, adding some Reflections upon the Conversion of the good Thief, and upon what happen'd to *St. Mary Magdalen* in the *Pharisee's* House, what afterwards in her own, and her Sister *Martha's*, and what

what after Christ's Death and Resurrection.

Who this Woman was is much controverted, and is sooner question'd than answer'd: I know such Problematical Disquisitions, which have more Subtilty than Usefulness, (as *Erasmus* on this very *Quare* says) are superfluous; and of them we may say, as the Philosopher did of the *Atbenian* Shops, *How many Things are here which we need not*: And therefore I shall omit these Disquisitions, and will not be curious where the Scripture is silent: Whosoever she was, she still carries the Name of what for some time she was, *A Woman that was a Sinner*.

We commonly see some artificial Pictures, which according to divers Sights and Aspects, represent divers Things: Such an admirable Piece, with a double Resemblance, hath St. *Luke* (an excellent Painter) here delineated in the most lively Colours: Look on one side, you shall see a lascivious Woman offering herself to Sale in the most tempting Manner; step on the other side, you may behold an admirable Convert, attended with a Retinue of Graces: View it which way you will, here is the word, *Ecce, Behold*, like a Curtain before some exact Piece of Workmanship, which likewise

hath a double Reference to the Power of Christ who drew this Sinner, and to his Mercy who receiv'd her.

In this noble History are several weighty Circumstances like so many Wedges of Gold in a rich Mineral, and one Ingot appears at the Head of the Mine, *Behold a Woman*, which is a Word of Emphasis and Energy, and if this Statue stand over the House, a *Jesus* is within: Here, like *Janus*, it looks backward and forward; and so I shall discourse of this Woman both as a Sinner, and as a Penitent. And if it shall seem distastful, that I insist a little longer than perhaps the Reader may judge necessary on the particular Sin, for which this Woman was publickly noted, let me put him in Mind of the Answer which the Comic Poet gave, who being accus'd of having brought a Lewd debauch'd Russian upon the Stage, and so setting a bad Example to young Men: *'Tis true*, says he, *I brought such a Man on, but I hang'd him before he went off, and so I gave them a good Example.* Here is a better Lesson to be learn'd: All Women may accept this Woman as a Pattern to imitate, and even the best may learn somewhat from her Story. For how sinful soever she may appear at first, let us suspend
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our Censure till the last Act, then we shall find how she became *à lebête, phisala*, of a Cauldron boiling with Lust, a Chrystal Vial of pure Chastity; how she that at first was running apace into the *Dead Sea*, did speedily turn into the Path to *Paradise*.

I shall begin with her Fall, and consider her first as a Sinner.

But alas! who is not so? Had she not been a Sinner she had been a Miracle; he that knows himself to be a Man, knows himself to be a Sinner, for in the Loins of our first Parents we all sinned; so that it is absurd to suppose a Separation of Sin from Man's Nature: In our Conceptions thro' that Original Pollution, we are all warm'd in unclean Blood, and still we continue *ponere Adam super Adam*, to add new Sin to our Original Sin: This Hereditary Poison is inbred in every Man, and the Sullage of *Adam's* Clay, sticks fast to us: By *Adam's* sinning all his Seed are become sinful, and all his Off-spring, as in a continued Line, do like corrupted Branches of a rotten Tree, still bring forth corrupted Fruits.

The most perfect and glorious Light in the World is the Sun in the Firmament, yet hath he his Parallax, and his

Variation: And what Son of *Adam* was ever found, thro' the Zodiack of whose Life an Ecliptick could not be drawn? A Man without Sin is like the Mountain of Gold, or the Philosopher's Stone, which have no Existence but in Theory and the Operation of the Understanding. In Scholastical Speculations you will hear the Noise of such a Being, but you shall no sooner find him than the Eccho in the Poet, *Quem non invenis usquam, esse putas nusquam*: Such Utopical Perfection is only an idle Dream of the Donatists. It is the Voice of an Apostle, *In many Things we offend all*. Nothing more certain, than that Corruption has deep Root in God's peculiar People; Even their best Works (and they too like *Solomon's* Sculpture, *a little upon a Pillar rare and few*) will but weigh light in the Scales of the Sanctuary. As the Curtezan *Lais* said, *Philosophers did sometimes knock at her Gates, as well as other Men*; so the best Men are often overtaken by human Frailties; let the best do what they can, they are but imperfectly Good, in some Matter or other they step aside from God's Commands. It is a Truth as clear as the Sun, that the Seeds of Sin are in all Men, the Seeds not the Practice; there is not in all

all the same Eruption, but there is in all the same Corruption. Some are Kytes, others Hawks, and the rest Eagles, and yet all from the same Eyrie; he that bears Humanity about him, he that's cloathed with Flesh and Blood, cannot but Sin: And yet tho' we cannot avoid being Tempted, yet we may shun the Commission of Sin. It is one Thing to dart and glance a wanton Desire, and another to court and plead for it. Tho' the Motions of Flesh be alike in all Men, yet the humouring those Motions is not so. It is one Thing for a Man to Sin, another to give himself over to the Commission of Sin. This continuance in any notorious Sin, is not only a Grave to the Soul, but a great Stone rolled to the Mouth thereof to keep it down.

What *Erasmus* says of *Paris*, *That after a Man hath used himself to the odious Scent of it, it grows more and more agreeable to him*, is too true of Sin, which by long Entertainment becomes Customary, and not easy to be dismiss'd.

We know that an expert Swimmer, being under Water, feels not the weight of a full freighted Ship of a thousand Tuns riding perpendicularly over his Head; so whilst we swim in the Custom

of any pleasing Sin, we are insensible of the Burthen of it; for frequency of Sin doth flesh us in Immodesty, assiduity in Impudence, and that Sin is almost incurable that is steel'd by Custom; which is a true Character given of this Woman, who is not describ'd as a Woman who had sinned, but *a Woman that was a Sinner*; it was not a transient, but a permanent Condition, that gave her that Denomination, her long continuance in her Trade had branded her with this Title, *A Woman that was a Sinner*.

This Woman was of a Noble Descent, and (as is generally receiv'd) was remarkable for a luxurious and incontinent Life; and in those loose Days, wherein *Herod* erected his Theaters and Amphitheatres, Debauchery was very much encouraged. And however Wantons may flatter themselves, and take that for true Doctrine, which the unwise Tutor sometime spoke in the Comedy, *Non est crede mihi, adolescenti*; *It is no such Fault in a young Man to follow Harlots*; yet it is such a Sin, as commonly drives to the Devil at once, a Sin which once indulged becomes what may be call'd a pleasant Madness.

History tells us of a certain Well in *Epirus* that will quench Firebrands if put into it, and yet when they are quenched it will presently set them on Fire again: Like this Water is a lascivious Woman, when she quencheth the Lust of the Body for a time, she setteth it on Fire afterwards much more wittily: Therefore *Fonseca* the *Spaniard* hath Emblem'd this Vice by the Phoenix, which does revive and renew herself by the Fire which she kindles by the motion of her Wings. Thus we mourn perhaps, and bewail, and repent, of the Sin we have committed, and desire to give it over, that it may Die with us, but with the Wings of our Thoughts we blow those Coals afresh, and make them Flame more than before.

Thus we walk the Round, first we act a Sin because the Thought pleases us; then we think that Sin over again, because the Act hath pleas'd us; and among the great variety of Sins, there is none more plausible, nor more pleasing to Nature than Wantonness: How many set their Souls burning in the Flames thereof, and (as *Nero* did when he had set *Rome* on Fire) behold them with Transport and Delight? How many

many silly Wretches, like the foolish Lark, whilst it playeth with the Feather, and stoopeth to the Glasse, are caught in the Fowler's Net? For a lascivious Woman (to give a short but true Character of her) is the Devil's Pitfall, a Trap to catch our Souls: Her Eyes, like free Booters, live upon the spoil of Stragglers; she baits her Desires with a million of prostituted Countenances, her display'd Breasts, and loose Glances, Locks wantonly waving over her Shoulders, her artificial Complection, (the Counterfeit of the great Seal of Nature) her curl'd Hair, (the Sophistry of the old cunning Serpent) her high Washes and Paintings are so many Lures to bring the Adulterer to the Snare.

But chaste Thoughts will check and never stoop to such Enticements; for when Fire falleth on Fuel that is wet it presently goeth out.

When *Potiphar's* Wife, one of the greatest Ladies in *Egypt*, did inordinately affect, impudently solicit, and, in a manner, force the Modesty of her good Servant *Joseph*, how much rather did he leave his Garment than his Virtue? Nor did he rescue himself from Adultery and Danger by Violence to her Person,

Person, nor neglect the Duties he owed her as a Servant, but with the hazard of his Name, Life and Liberty, he made an innocent Escape to preserve his better Garment of Chastity.

The *Arabian* Proverb is elegant, *Obstrue quinque fenestras ut luceat domus*, Shut the five Windows that the House may be lightsome; cleanse the Limbeck of the Senses, least thence some Pollution drop into the Soul. If at once we would overcome the Temptation and the Tempter, we must resolve, with *Alipius*, to shut our Eyes when we come amongst Vanities; for the Eye is the first Part that is struck in such Engagements, upon the first Assault it yields up our strongest Fort: The *Eye* besides is the vainest of all the Senses, it takes extream Delight to be cheated; one of the Pleasures of the Eye is the Deception of it, and how easy is that Sense deluded which delights to be deceived.

The ancient Philosophers before *Aristotle*, that held Vision to be perform'd by an Emission of Beams, imagin'd the Eye to be of a fiery Nature, wherein they were confirm'd by observing, if the Eye had a Blow, Fire seems to sparkle out of it: But certainly, how watry soever better Experience hath found the Substance

Substance of the Eye, it is *spiritually fiery*, both actively and passively; passively, for that it is inflamed by every wanton Beam, actively, it sets the whole Heart on Fire with the inordinate Flames of Concupiscence: Thus *Sichem* saw *Dinah* and defiled her; *Viderunt Oculi, raperant pectora flammæ*, no sooner did he see her than his Breast was inflam'd with *Lust*. Thus *Amon* fell sick for *Tamar's* Sake, his desire of her began at the first Interview. Thus when *David* walked upon the Roof of his Palace, and discovered from thence a beautiful Woman washing her self; here was *Mulier longè libido prope*, for his petulant Eye recoil'd upon his Heart, and smote him with vitious Desires. Yet it is not the Eye it self, (for what is that but the Beauty of the Face, the bright Star of the Orb it moves in) but the Viciousness of the Eye that is to be condemn'd; when we talk with our Eyes, then 'tis that we sin with them. But I dare not enlarge upon this Subject for fear of committing that which was a noted Fault in *Marcellus* the Rhetoritian, (as *Suetonius* tells us) that lighting on a Figure he would pursue it till he forgot the Matter in hand; I will therefore return to discourse more particularly of this *Woman*, so sinful

ful in her Life, so hateful for her Lust, and so devoted to Incontinence, that she was become a common Scandal: For by her bad Example she made the City so infamous, that she might more fitly be call'd, *peccatum Hierosolymæ quam peccatrix*, the Sin of Jerusalem, rather than a Sinner in Jerusalem, as *Petrus Chrysologus* observes, because the whole City shar'd the Disgrace which she deserv'd.

Sin is Sin wherever committed, whether before a Multitude, or in a Desert; yet the more publick the Fact is, the greater is the Scandal, and this Woman's Offence was the more notorious, because she was a *City Sinner*.

I confess that no Place can secure one from Temptations, which come in too hastily and un-invited, like rough Winds from every Corner of the Sky, and in such Number, as if each Minute were computed by them.

We are apt to Fall, because we are Mutable, but we do not commonly Fall except some Occasion be given; and how full is the World of such Occasions? Our common Adversary, the *Devil* (who has a thousand Ways of attacking us) finds how apt we are to stumble at something or other in our way: He knows

knows which way our corrupted Nature bends, he sifteth out what will work upon our Affections and Dispositions, and with that he wooes our Consent to Sin; like a skilful Sailor he marks the Wind, and accordingly hoisteth up or striketh Sail; or, like a cunning Poet, he gives every Actor a Part agreeable, and makes a perpetual Use of the Bent of our Nature: Thus hath he a Wedge of Gold for covetous *Achan*, a Crown for ambitious *Absalom*, and a *Dinah* for *Sichem*. And the Concurrence of Time and Place are his principal Engines, which serve to give Aim to such Faults as our Nature is too apt to commit without a Prompter; then surely in a corrupt debauched *City* are more Invitations to Sin, than in private Cells. In a large Concourse of People you'll find many Brokers of Villany, who live upon the Spoil of the unthinking Part of Mankind. Where many Pots are boiling there must needs be much *Scum*; where Multitudes of Strangers meet, where variety of Delights entertain the Eye, it is more difficult to avoid Temptations, for our Nature herein is like Fire, which, if there be any Infection in the Room, draws it to its self, or like Jeat, which, omitting all more noble
and

and precious things, attracts only Straws and Dirt.

It was in a *City* where this Woman liv'd, where by her lew'd Example she drew in others to offend, and her Example was more prejudicial because she was of a good Family: *Satan's* Infections many times send their Influence through some great Star into lesser Bodies, for Example is like a Stone thrown into a Pond, which makes Circles which dilates themselves till they are stopped by the Banks; or like a Plague-fore which infects the By-standers and Lookers on.

I do not find the Name of the City set down, yet many are bold to affirm it was *Naim*, others will have it *Jerusalem*; where-ever she liv'd she was too well known in her Time, and having already shew'd what her Offence was, I will not lay my Finger again upon that Blot; and having thus far drawn the black Lines of her Life, I will now look on the other Part, and consider her as she hath put off the *Sinner*, and as she is now become a *Penitent*.

Scipio (as *Livy* says) never look'd so fresh, nor appeared so lovely to the Eyes of his Soldiers, as after his Recovery from a dangerous Sicknefs in the Camp; so
neither

neither does the *Soul* ever seem more beautiful than when she is restor'd to Health after some dangerous Conflict. The *Palladium* was very much esteem'd by both *Trojans* and *Gracians*, not so much for the Matter of Workmanship, as because it was snatch'd out of the Flames of *Troy*; so no Soul is more precious in the sight of *God* and his *Angels* than that which is snatch'd out of the Fire of Hell, and Jaws of Death.

To see Men turning from God to the World, from Piety to Prophaness, is as common as lamentable, every Day's Experience shews us such Sights. But to see Men return to God, is as happy as wondrous to *Men* and *Angels*; and what is more strange, we see the first Disciples that came to *Christ* was such as were most desperately enthrall'd to *Satan*. The *Magi*, *Publicans*, Harlots, the Theif, the Blasphemer, &c. This shews the Depth of *Christ's* unspeakable Mercy; who of the knottiest and most crooked Timber can make Rafter and Cielings for his own House: Thus he can call a *Zacheus* from a *Toll-Booth* to be a *Disciple*, and *Matthew* to be an *Apostle*, and this sinful Woman to be a Convert; who it seems came to *Jesus* in *Simon* the *Pharisee's* House, who had invited *Christ* to eat with him.

She

She came not (as the staring Multitude) to glut her Eyes with the Sight of a Miracle and his glorious Person, nor (as did the Centurion or the *Syrophœnitian Woman*, or the Ruler of the Synagogue) for Cure of her Sickneſs, or in behalf of her Friend, or Child, or Servant, but (the only Example of this ſort of coming) came for a Cure not of any bodily Grief or Malady, but for her Sins. She came with Remorſe and Regret for them, to lay her Burthen at *Jeſus's* Feet to preſent him with a broken and penitent Heart, a weeping Eye and great Affliction; for ſhe came humbling her ſelf, and fell down before him weeping bitterly for her Sins, pouring out a Flood of Tears large enough to waſh the Feet of *Jeſus*, which ſhe wip'd with the Hairs of her Head.

Purgata reſeſſit

Per gemitum propriique lavans in gurgite fletus

Munda ſuis lacrymis redit & deterſa capillis.

But amongſt all the Demonſtrations of God's Mercy, we can never enough magnify his Goodneſs and Power in the Conversion of the dying Thief, who was execrable amongſt Men, and a Blaſphemer

L

mer

mer of God: My Soul is lost in Amazement when I think of him; the Offender came to die, nothing was in his Thoughts but his Guilt and Torment: *Christ* was silent when he revil'd him, and being yet in his Blood, *Christ* said, *this Soul shall live*; his good Spirit so breath'd upon him, and the Force of his Grace work'd so instantly and powerfully, that his last Hour was his first, wherein he knew his Saviour to be God. *In ipso Crucis candelabro Sol resplenduit: The Sun did shine upon him from the Candlestick of the Cross*: The Light whereof was so powerful, that it awaken'd this drowsy sleeping Thief, leaving him so well instructed, that he presently burns with a Zealous Impatience; he cannot hear the Revilings of his Companion, but suddenly he becomes a Convert, chiding his Fellow-sufferer, saying, *Doeſt not thou fear God, ſeeing thou art in the ſame Condemnation*. He confeſſes his Sins, *We receive the juſt rewards of our Deeds, But this Man hath done nothing amiſs*; wherein he ſhews himſelf a Doctor to preach; and laſtly he becomes a Martyr praying, *Lord remember me when thou com'eſt into thy Kingdom*: He that before had in his Eye nothing but preſent Death, is now liſted above his Croſs, in a bleſſed Ambition, *Lord remember*

ber me when thou comest into thy Kingdom. Is this the Voice of a Thief or of a Disciple? *Dic ô Latro, ubi Thronus ex Saphyro, ubi Cherubin, & exercitus cæli, ubi Corona, Sceptrum & purpura, ut Eum dicas Regem.* Tell me O Thief, what induc'd thee to stile him King. Where is his Throne? Where are the Cherubin and the whole Host of Heaven? Seest thou any other Crown than that of Thorns; any other Scepter than strong Iron Nails driven up to the Head through the Palms of those blessed Hands, any other Purple but his Blood, any other Throne but his Cross? What dost thou see that can perswade thee to call him King? O Faith greater than Death! that can look beyond a Cross at a Crown, beyond Dissolution at a Remembrance of Life and Glory; as no Disciple could be more faithful, so no Saint could be more happy; *Nam juxta fluenta plenissimæ gratiam simul accepit & gloriam; For Grace and Glory with a full Tide both at once came flowing in upon him.* The Reward every way out-weighed the Request, *Magis velox erat præmium quàm petitio, & ubetior gratia quam precotio; It was a greater Favour* (saith St. Leo) *to put this so discreet and humble a Petition into this Thief's Heart, but a much greater Favour to give him so good and quick a*

Dispatch. St. Cyprian says, *Quid tu Domine Stephano amplius contulisti.* What could the *Martyr* St. Stephen enjoy more, or that beloved Disciple that lean'd on *Christ's* Bosom? Or what could the long Service of those that endur'd the Heat of the Day obtain more at God's Hands? But God gives them this Answer, *I do thee no Wrong, didst not thou agree with me for a Penny.*

Some Labourers were working hard in the Vineyard from the *first* Hour, others from the *third*, others began at the *ninth* when the Sun was setting; first came *Adam*, then *Noah*, after him *Abraham*, and the rest of the Holy *Prophets*; but this *Thief* came at the Sun-setting, and he that in the Morning was on his way towards Hell, is in the Evening with his Lord in *Paradise*. For no sooner had he cried, *Lord remember*, but *Christ* answers him immediately, *I say unto thee*, and promises *thou shalt*, and seals that Promise with a *Verily*, and promises more than is asked, and that soon, *Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt this Day be with me in Paradise.*

So soon as *Christ* afforded this *Thief* any Call, he came; and yet this *Thief's* Conversion is become a Proverb, and satisfies and serves a Sinner in all Cases of a late and Death-bed Repentance;
But

But they that urge him as a Precedent, ought to consider that this *Thief*, was not converted at *last*, but at *first*; and when we can find out such another Day, we may expect such another Mercy, a Day that open'd the Graves of the Dead, a Day that divided the Veil of the Temple it self, a Day which the *Sun* durst not see, a Day that saw the Soul of God (if I may so say, seeing that *God* was *Man* too) depart from *Man*; there shall be no more such Days, and therefore we must not presume upon such Mercy.

To the Chief of the Apostles, *St. Peter*, *Christ* says, *Whither I go thou canst not come*; but to this *Thief*, he says, *This Day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*. So soon did *Christ* bring this Thief to that height of Faith, but even in that low Estate upon the *Cross*, he pray'd for a *Spiritual Kingdom*; whereas the *Apostles* themselves (whom *Christ* had estated in *Heaven*, and had given them Reversions of judiciary Places, twelve Seats to judge the twelve Tribes) yet in that Exaltation. when *Christ* was ascending, they talked to him of a *Temporal Kingdom*. *Sic facit fides innocentem latronem facit infidelitas Apostolos criminosos*. *Christ* infused so much Faith into this *Thief*

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as justify'd him, and leaves the *Apostles* so far to their Infirmities as endangers them.

This *Thief* came to know those Wounds that were in *Christ's* Body were his own Wounds in the Body of his *Saviour*, so he came to declare perfect Faith professing *Christ's* Innocence, perfect Hope in the *memento mei*, and perfect Charity in rebuking his Companion: He was such a *Thief* as deserved Praise and Wonder, who had a good Bargain of Death, and was the better and longer lived for being Hang'd, for he was thereby made partaker of *Christ's* Matyrdom and Kingdom: And this *Thief* hath done nothing but what we may all do, if we will lay hold on that Grace as he did: *Assumemus vocem latronis, si nolumus esse latrones, ut sedeamus à Dextris, pendeamus à Dextris*: Let us be content to suffer, but suffer in the Right, suffering as a Malefactor is somewhat too much on the Left Hand; and yet even that Suffering does bring many to the Right Hand, being joined with a true and hearty Repentance, which is as a City of Refuge to fly unto, it is the happy Plank that has sav'd many a *Soul* from the *Gulph* of Despair, the Board which after Shipwreck will

will carry us safe unto Land; and it is not ill compared to a *Phœnix's* Nest, wherein the *Old Adam* is consum'd to Ashes, out of which arises a new Man of God; for Conversation is a sacred Riddle, wherein when we are Born, we are Buried; and when we are quicken'd we are kill'd, and when we are mortified we are rais'd. Thus *Nineveh* was overthrown and yet not overthrown, it was overthrown by Sin, and built again by Repentance. He that is a skilful Penitent does cunningly play this After-game, and a Sinner after his Recovery for the most part seeks *God* more fervently, and is more fearful of Relapsing, than before of Sinning; like wild Beasts breaking from their Toils, they are more cautious for the future, and the *Saints* come out of the Bed of their Sins, as *Hezekiah* did out of his sick Bed, more Humble, more Holy, more Penitent; as the *Eagle* that is weary'd, comes out of the Water, into which she has dip'd her Wings, with a more towering Assent towards *Heaven* than ever. *Dum petere Regem*, says *Martial*, when *Mutius Scaevola* missed his Aim, and instead of killing *Porfenna*, slew one of his Secretaries by mistake, he presently offer'd that Hand which gave the Blow as a

willing Sacrifice to the Flame, which Hand grew famous for being deceiv'd; and it had been less Reputation to have struck his Enemy to the Heart, than to punish it so stoutly for missing its Aim; upon which the Poet took Occasion to say.

*Major decepta fama est & gloria dextra,
Si non errasset, fecerat illa minus.*

Without any change, I may apply it to *Mary Magdalen's* Conversion :

Si non peccasset fecerat illa minus.

She would not have been so famous, had she not sinn'd; neither is this a Paradox; for what an Enemy would upbraid by way of Reproach, is the greatest Praise that can be; their very Sins do honour some, as the *Devils* did *Mary Magdalen*, who are mention'd for her Glory, since we do not hear of them until they were cast out; For Repentance is a *Supercedeas* that dischargeth Sin, making *God* to be merciful, *Angels* to be joyful, and *Man* to be acceptable; And as *St. Austin* affirms, *It is a greater Deliverance, a mightier Miracle, and a bigger Grace, that a Sinner would be Converted, than that*

that being converted he should afterwards be saved: Here we see *Mary Magdalen* being now touch'd with Repentance for her former Sins and Vanities, like the thirsty and panting Hart in the extremity of Heat, does eagerly long for the cooling Springs. Her Soul was deeply wounded with the sting of her Sins, it stuck so fast that she could not get it out, therefore with the wounded Deer she comes to the Sovereign *Dittany* to expel it; the Pool of her Conscience was troubled, and with the descending Angel instantly she steps in for a Cure; for *ut cognovit venit*, as soon as she knew where *Jesus* was, she makes haste to him; and the Zeal with which she approacheth *Christ* is very remarkable. *Christ* was at Dinner in a Pharisee's House, where we may observe by the way, that *Christ* frequented Feasts, and we do not find he was ever invited to any Table and refus'd it; if a Pharisee or a Publican invited him, he made no difficulty to go, the end of his going indeed was not to Eat, but to gain Souls to God, and to fulfil the Will of his Father, which was his *Meat* and *Drink*: And at whose Table did *Jesus* ever Eat, and left not the *Host* a Gainer? When *Zachaeus* entertain'd him, Salvation came that

that Day to his House, with the Author of it ; and now when this Pharisee entertain'd him, his Table was honour'd with the publick Remission of a Penitent Sinner. But how comes this Woman to thrust her self into this Pharisee's House ? Certainly great was her Faith, since no Disadvantage could affright her from coming to *Jesus*, not the Frowns, nor the Censure of a rigid Host, who darted from his Eyes Disdain and Scorn, seeing so notorious a *Strumpet* come to the Upper Chamber where he entertain'd his Company, and that too in *Christ's* Presence, who knew her wicked Life, and (no doubt) was offended at her Action. A *Pharisee's* House might have seem'd indeed an unlikely Place to find a *Saviour* in, and it was very improper to serve in Tears at a Banquet : Certainly the *Holy Spirit* mov'd on the Waters : Doubtless this Woman had heard from our *Saviour's* Lips, in his Heavenly Sermons, many gracious Invitations of all distress'd and Sin-burthen'd Souls, and now at length she was entangled in the Net of his Heavenly Doctrine ; For our *Saviour* (as *St. Chrysostom* says) hath two sorts of Nets, a one of Wonders, another of Words ; in the former of these he caught those many that believ'd on his

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his Name ; by the latter he enclos'd his very Enemies, even those very Officers that were sent to apprehend him, and bring him before the *High Priest* ; and still doth our Blessed Saviour spin out the Thread of his Love, to an infinite Length, to try whether we will lay hold on it. He doth angle for us, he sits in *Heaven*, lets down the Line of his Love, and Baits it with his *Mercy*, to see whether we will swallow it, that he may catch our Souls ; with such a Hook was this Woman taken, she had treasur'd up his Sayings in her Memory, she had observ'd that he not only pardon'd Sinners, but receiv'd them into his Presence, she had observ'd the Passages of his Power and Mercy, and a deep Remorse wrought in her self, for her mispent Life ; and surely, had not the Spirit of God wrought upon her, e'er she came, she had neither fought nor found *Christ*. For those good Graces which *God* finds in us, are like the Silver which *Joseph* found in *Benjamin's* Sack, of his own putting in. If his Hand does not move the golden *Cymbal*, it will give no pleasant Sound, for our Will herein is like a lower Sphere, which receives its Motions from some first Mover. And we may believe, the *Holy Spirit* first breath'd, and then that
Blast

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Blast begat the Shower of Tears which *Mary* pour'd out ; for first : Thus she being first mov'd by the *Spirit of God*, comes in and finds *Christ* whom she sought ; she comes into his Presence not empty handed, but with a precious Confection of *Ointment of Nardus*, the chief of all Ointments, which she intended to bestow ; this delicate odoriferous Perfume, she brings in as rich a Vessel, a *Box of Alabaster* ; she used likewise a good *Decorum*, she did not presently pour out her Ointment upon the Feet of *Jesus* ; but (observing a decent Order in her Repentance, and in this her laudable Action) first she gives the Sacrifice of a broken Heart, she stood behind at *Jesus's* Feet, her Eyes sufficiently testified her godly Sorrow, which dropp'd down Tears as fast as the *Arabian* Trees their medicinal Gums : She wept so plentifully, that with those Streams of Penitence she began to wash his Feet, and did wipe them with the Hairs of her Head, to shew her Abjection or Neglect of her self : Thus cunningly in Abasement of her self does this humble Penitent, like the *Syropheetian* Woman, like a Dog, lick her Master's Feet ; at the Feet of *Christ* she makes a general Sacrifice of all those Things

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Things wherewith she had offended him :
*Quot habuit in se oblectamenta, tot de se
fecit Helocausta.*

*Peccavit meretrix oculis, labrisque, co-
misque,
Iude luunt crimen lumina, labra, coma.*

Her Eyes, her Lips, her Hair, her Ointment, all the Instruments of her Sin, were turn'd at her Conversion into the Means of Life ; as the *Israelites* that gave their Jewels to the making of a *Calf*, did afterwards bestow them upon the *Lord's* Tabernacle ; such was this Woman's Practice, who having now taken leave of her former Vanities, and disrob'd her self of all her rich Ornaments, does, like an excellent *Apothecary*, that knows how to mix his Medicines, make a most sovereign *Antidote* out of a most deadly *Poison*.

She used to send forth her alluring Beams into the Eyes of the lascivious *Paramours*, therefore from her Eyes flow a Deluge of Tears, shallow enough to bear the Ark of her Sorrow ; she had made her Lips the Incitements to Lust, and Inlets to Vanity, but now they sanctify themselves with their Respect to the *Son of God* ; her Hair, which she had
so

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so often curl'd at her Glass, doth now serve for a Towel to dry his Feet ; her odoriferous Perfume, wherewith she used to make her self acceptable to her amorous Companions, she bestows on those sacred Feet which her Eyes had watered, her Hair dried, and her Mouth kissed. And this strange Circumstance of her anointing was scarce done to any but *Christ*, nor to him but by this Woman : It was esteemed so great an Extasy of Love and Adoration, that to anoint the Feet even of the greatest *Monarch*, was long unknown in all the Pumps and Greatness of the *Roman* Prodigality. It was not us'd (as *Pliny* says in his natural History) till *Otho* taught it *Nero*, in whose Instance it was by *Pliny* reckon'd for a Prodigy of unnecessary Profusion, and in it self it was a Present for a *Prince*, and an *Alabaster Box* of Nard Pistick was sent as a great Present from *Cambyses* to the King of *Ethiopia*.

But was the Ointment so precious, and she so poor that she could not bring a Napkin ? Certainly she wanted not fine Linnen to have dry'd *Christ*'s Feet with ; but to shew her hearty Devotion, and sincere Humility, her Shame, her Tears, her godly Sorrow were not enough, she still

still seeks farther to make her self more vile, and of no Price before *Christ*; she herself is the Servant that waits on him; from herself do fall the Dews of Water that wash his Feet; and as her Eyes were the *Ewer*, so her Hairs were the *Towel*, using the chiefest Ornament of her Head in the meanest Office of our Saviour's Feet; and thus she seems to climb up towards Heaven by the same Rounds of that Ladder by which she was formerly going down to Hell.

When *Simon* the *Pharisee* observed this Woman so busy in the Expression of her *Religion* and Veneration of *Jesus*, he thought within himself, this was no *Prophet* that did not know her to be a *Sinner*, and that would suffer her to touch him. For altho' the *Jews* Religion did permit the Harlots of their own Nation to live and enjoy all the Priviledges of their Nation, except only that their Oblations were refus'd: Yet the Pharisees (who pretended to a greater Degree of Sanctity than others) would not permit them to civil Usages, or Benefits of ordinary Society, and thought Religion it self, and the Honour of a Prophet, was concern'd in the same Superstitiousness. And therefore *Simon* made an Objection within himself, which *Jesus*

Jesus knowing (who understood his Thoughts as well as his Words) made an Apology for her and himself by a civil Question, express'd by way of Parable of two Debtors, to whom a greater and a smaller Debt respectively was forgiven, both of them concluding, that they would love their merciful Creditor in Proportion to his Mercy ; which was *Mary Magdalen's* Case, who, because she had much forgiven, loved much, and express'd it in Characters so large, that the *Pharisee* might read his own Incivility and unhospitable Entertainment of the *Master*, when it stood confront-ed with the Magnificency of *Mary Magdalen's* Charity and Penance, the last of which she sufficiently express'd by her Tears.

Such is *God's* Goodness, that he hath placed in the Eye both the Disease and the Cure, the Faculty of Seeing, and the Sluce of Tears, that they who offend by Seeing, may be recover'd by Weeping. Tears are the Favourites, that have the Ear of the *King of Heaven* ; they are our Bills of *Exchange* which he allows, and returns them with what Sums of Blessings we desire ; so long as we pay him this Type of our Devotion, so long is our Tenure safe, and

and our Title to his Goodness and Mercy unquestionable.

This Sovereign Water will recall a Sinner to the Life of Grace, tho' never so far gone. These heavenly Showers are the Streams of *Jordan* which cure our *Leprosy*, the *Silim* to cure our Blindness, the *Bethesda* to heal our Lameness and Defects of Obedience ; never was the Poison of any Sin so cold, but the Hand of Repentance could thaw it ; never was the Flame of any Sin so hot, but the Tears of Repentance could cool it : *Magis frugifera Lacrymantes vineæ*. The bleeding Heart, like the dropping Vine, is for the most Part fruitful. I cannot here express my Thoughts of *Mary Magdalen's* Tears in a better Strain than that of the Poet.

*Magdala, dum tristi vitiorum compede victa,
Solvendam Domini se jacet ante pedes
Quam dulces fundit lacrymas ! quam nobile flumen
Nascitur ex oculi divite fonte sui !
Pactolus tali se vellet origine nasci,
Vellet & auriferi nobilis unda Tagi.
Illi etenim solum voluunt sub fluctibus aurum :
At fluit ex oculis plurima gemma suis.*

Her Ointment indeed was precious, but her Tears were more so ; her Tears were her best Advocates to plead for Mercy at the Throne of Grace : *Interdum lacryma pondera vocis habent* : For sometimes Tears have as much Force as Words. She spake not, for she knew she was before one who knew the most retir'd Thoughts, and most private Desires of her Soul ; what need her Tongue speak, when her *Eyes*, her *Hands*, her *Gesture*, her *Countenance*, and her whole *Behaviour*, spoke her Desires.

Amongst other Things observable in the greater and more solemn Feasts of the *Jews*, there were some *Ceremonies* used by them as Preparations to their Feasts, which *Josephus* tells us were *Three*. *First*, Their *Salutation*, which was shewn either by Words, or some humble Posture of the Body, sometimes by Prostrating their whole Body, sometimes by kissing the Feet, as in this Passage, and commonly by an ordinary Kiss of the Cheek, as a Pledge of their welcome to their Guest. The *Second* was the *Washing* of their Feet before they sat down to Eat. The *Third* Compliment was pouring Oil upon the Head. In all which Observances, *Simon* (tho' of the formal Sect of the *Pharisees*) was

was defective. Infomuch that our *Saviour* taxes him of this neglected Office in his Entertainment, *Thou gavest me no Water for my Feet*, &c. And well might the *Pharisee* read his own Fault in the Praise *Christ* gave of this Woman, so well seen in the Customs of her Country, in redoubling of her Kisses of an humble Thankfulness on those sacred Feet.

To Repent then is to Kiss the Feet of *Jesus*, and it is all one to be sorry for our Sins, and to love *him*; this is confirm'd by our *Saviour's* Words, who denominates this whole Action from *Love*. *Christ* says not, she *wept* much, she *sorrow'd* much, but she *lov'd* much, and by all means she sought to express her great Love, which great Mercy rais'd. For nothing she had was too dear, with her most precious and fragrant Ointment she anointed our *Saviour's* Feet, that rich and costly Testimony of her Love she bestow'd freely, for she did not *drop* but *pour*, not a *Dram* or *two*, but a *whole Pound*, not reserving any, but breaking the Box, and pouring it all out: What went before was the Sacrifice of a broken Heart, with that first Sacrifice she ador'd the Divinity of *Christ*, this last she tendreth to his Humanity: The

first Shower of her Tears were Tears of *Sorrow* and *Repentance*; the latter, which overtook the first, were Tears of *Joy* and *Love*. And so pleasing to *Christ* were all the Actions of this perfect Penitent, that he not only defended her against the *Pharisee*, in preferring her Kindness to the Entertainment of his House; but against *Satan* and the Powers of Hell, in forgiving her many Sins without any Enumeration of them. This is the Substance of what passed betwixt *Jesus* and *Mary Magdalen* in the *Pharisee's* House; but I cannot leave this happy Convert there, but must follow her to *Bethany*, to see her Comportment there, and at our *Saviour's* Death, and after that at his Resurrection.

Jesus having left *Jerusalem* in the third Year of his Publick Ministry, after he had Wept over it, he came to *Bethany*, where he met with another sort of Reception than he had at the *Holy City*; there he Supped; where *Martha* making great Preparations for his Entertainment, to express her Joy and Affection to his Person, desir'd *Jesus* to dismiss her Sister *Mary* from his Feet, who sat there Feasting herself with the Food of Angels, the Words of God, unmindful of providing for his Entertainment: But
Jesus

Jesus commended her Choice, and tho' he did not expressly refuse *Martha's* Civility, yet he preferr'd *Mary's* Religion. Here *Mary Magdalen* (who had spent before one Box of *Nard Pistick* upon our *Lord's* Feet as a Sacrifice for her Conversion) now bestow'd another in Thankfulness in restoring her Brother *Lazarus* to Life, and consign'd her *Lord* to his Burial; and here too she met with an evil Interpreter, *Judas* an *Apostle*, one of *Christ's* own Family, pretended it had been better to have given it to the Poor; but it was *Malice* and the Spirit of Envy that spoke, not Religion. For he that sees an Action well done, and seeks to undervalue it, by telling how it might have been done better, reproves nothing but his own Spirit: For a Man may do very well, and *God* will accept it, tho' to say he might have done better, is to say only, that Action was not the most absolute and perfect in its Kind; but the End of that Man best shew'd his present Meaning; and at the best it could be no other than a rash Judgment of the Action and Intent of *Mary Magdalen*, and by his declaiming against her, he made tacite Reflections upon his *Lord* for suffering it; and yet it is not intima-

ted in the History of the Life of *Jesus*, that *Judas* had any Malice against the Person of *Christ*; for when afterwards he saw the Matter was to end in the Death of the Lord, he repented; but a base unworthy Spirit of Covetousness possess'd him, and the Relicks of Indignation for missing the Price of the Ointment burnt in his Bowels, with a secret, dark, melancholy Fire, and broke out into an Action which all Ages of the World could never Parallel: *To what end was this waste of Ointment*, says *Judas*, *for it might have been sold for more than Three Hundred Pence, and been given to the Poor*; but *Jesus* said, *Let her alone, why trouble you her, she hath wrought a good work on me.*

As this was well intended, it was well taken by *Christ*, and approv'd on by all present except *Judas*, who liking his own Gain better than any Scent in the *Apothecaries* Shop, seeing that spent on his Master's Head, which he wish'd in his own Purse, grumbled at it; and that with so colourable a Pretence, that it was a needless Expence, a Waste, and that it might have been bestow'd much better for the Relief of the *Poor*, as that *Judas* drew some of the *Disciples* to favour the Motion, and to dislike
Mary

Mary Magdalen and her Action ; so that both they and he join'd in one Bill ; but he of wretched Covetousness of Mind, and they of a simple plain Intent and Purpose, thinking all that was well spoken was well meant ; so that the Action was not brought only against her that bestow'd it, but against *Christ* that admitted it. Whereupon he pleads her Cause, not only excusing her, but commending it as a good Work. And yet the Ointment was not so pleasing to his Sense as her Gratitude was to his Spirit ; for he then declar'd, that the Ointment which fill'd the House with the Scent, should fill the whole World with the Report of it ; and as far as the Gospel should be preach'd, so far should the Remembrance of her Action reach, as well for her Commendation, as for our Imitation.

Thus we see Things well done are oftentimes ill taken, and often good Intentions want good Constructions. No Person had such Experience of this as *Mary Magdalen* : The Scripture records three several Virtues of hers, and in each of them she was murmur'd at. When in the Bitterness of her Soul, she shew'd her Repentance by Tears, *Simon the Pharisee* did what he could to Disgrace her :

When sitting at *Christ's* Feet, *Martha* her Sister complain'd of her to *Christ*; and now here again the third Time, when in an honest regard of her Duty, she's shewing her Thankfulness for Comfort receiv'd, *Christ's* own Disciple speaks against her. So that if she washes *Christ's* Feet with Tears it contents not, if she anoints his Head with Balm its Matter of Displeasure, and if she sits still and says nothing, 'tis all one, still *Mary Magdalen* is in Fault, her Doings ever stand awry: This is the Fortune of all that follow her Steps; even *Christ* himself could neither have his Feet anointed, but *Simon* the *Pharisee*, nor his Head anointed, but *Judas* his Apostle, speaks against it.

But we must not leave *Mary Magdalen* here; for notwithstanding these great Discouragements and Rebukes, which she receiv'd from *Judas* and some of the Disciples, she neglected not her Duty, nor left her *Lord* till his Death; for loving *Christ* more than her Life, she followed him in his Journey to his Death, attending him when his Disciples fled, being more willing to Die with him, than to Live without him. She was last at his Cross, and first at his Grave, staid longest there, and was
 soonest

foonest here; she could not rest till she was up to seek him, sought him before the Day lighted her; she stood by the Grave, where faint Love uses not to stand; we bring our Friends to the Grave, and there leave them, but come no more at it, nor stay longer by it; but *Mary Magdalen* did, and she only and none but she, as we shall see by the Sequel of this Discourse.

We find in the whole Tenour of the *Gospel*, that God observes a mixture of much spiritual Power and Glory, with much outward Meanness: The *Gospel* is call'd a rich Treasure in an earthen Vessel; the Mystery conveyed is precious, but the Means of Conveyance mean and contemptible. The whole Mystery of *Christ* is made up of Power and Meekness; his Conception was by the Holy Ghost, of a pure Virgin, but the out-side Mean, his blessed Mother, an Earthen Vessel, the Spouse of a poor *Carpenter*; his Birth publish'd by an Angel, but discover'd first to poor Shepherds; his Lodging pointed out by a Star, and yet his Cradle but a Manger, his Nursery but a Stable: Being in the Wilderness he was attended by Angels; but see the poor Out-side, he was amongst wild Beasts; in his Agony he was

was full of Trembling and Horror, but then he receiv'd Comfort from Heaven by an Angel; at his Death he was Crucified with Thieves, but yet the Powers of *Heaven* and *Earth* trembled at it. The Tidings of his Resurrection were told by an Angel, but spread through the World by poor weak Women. Had Flesh and Blood had the Management of the News of his Resurrection, it would have been first publish'd to the Colledge of the *Apostles*, and St. *Peter* should have had the first Intellegence by a Vision of Angels directed to him. Kings and Princes make known their Minds to inferior People by their *Great Officers* and *Ministers*, but the *Court of Heaven* takes other Measures. God employs poor, and in the Eye of the World, contemptible Men, to declare his Will to the *Potentates* of the World: And this was the grand Objection made by the mistaken *Pagans* to *Christ* and his Disciples, that *Christianity* was set on foot by such abject and mean Persons as *Christ* made choice of; but that which begat in them Contempt and Scorn, ought to fill us with Wonder and Admiration.

And to make Amends for that Observation, that no good Angel ever assum'd the likeness of a Woman, here
are

are Women (of whom *Mary Magdalen* was chief) made Angels, *i. e.* (as the original signifies) *Messengers* and *Publishers* of the greatest Mystery of our Religion; for *Mary Magdalen*, with other devout Women, (who not considering the Resurrection of *Christ*) went with a pious Intention to do an Office of Respect and Honour to the Body of their Master, which they meant to enbalm in the Tomb, where they thought to have found it; there was *God*, the *God* of Life, dead and laid in a Grave, and here was *Man*, a *dead Man* risen out of the Grave; here are *Angels* of *Heaven* imployed in so low an Office as to instruct Women, and Women imploy'd in so high an Office as to instruct the *Apostles*; here are *angelical* Women, and *evangelical Angels*; Angels made *Evangeliſts* to preach the Gospel, and Women made *Angels* to be *Instructors* of the Church.

Now tho' it has been doubted whether the *blessed Virgin* was there when this pass'd at the Sepulchre, yet that *Mary Magdalen*, and *Mary* the Mother of *James* and *Salmon* were there is certain.

They came to enbalm the Body of *Jesus*, (for the Rights of embalming amongst

mongst the *Jews* us'd to last *forty Days*) and their Love was not satisfy'd with what *Josepb* had done; but herein they were very inconsiderate, for that was only done upon such Bodies as were extenerated and embowell'd, and then fill'd up and plaister'd about with Spices and Gums to preserve them from Putrefaction, when they were to be carried into remote Parts; but of these re-embalmings, after the Body had been laid in the Sepulchre, I never read, neither seems it to have been possible for these Women to have come at the Body of *Christ*: And by the Winding-sheet of *Christ*, which is kept in *Savoy*, it appears that that Sheet stuck so close to the Body, as that it did, and does still retain the Dimensions of his Body, and the Impressions and Marks of every Wound that he receiv'd in his Body; so that it would have been no easy Matter for these Women to have pull'd off that Sheet, if it had been fasten'd to his Body with nothing but his Blood; But if (as some Authors say) his Body was carried loose in the Sheet which is shew'd in *Savoy*, from the Cross to the Sepulchre, and then taken out of that Sheet and embalmed by *Nicodemus*, and wrapp'd up in other Linnen upon those
Spices

Spices and Gums which he bestow'd upon it, and then buried according to the Manner of the *Jews*, whose Custom it was to swath the Bodies of the Dead, as we do Children all over; (for so *Lazarus* came out bound Hand and Foot with Grave-Cloths) how could these Women think to embalm the Body of *Jesus* so swathed and bound up as that Body was? For certainly it was the Body not the Grave-cloaths they meant to embalm, and it seems strange that no one has touch'd upon this Doubt: All Expositors make good Use of their Piety and devout Care of their dead Master, but of the Impossibility of their coming to the Body, of the Irregularity of their Undertaking that, and proceeding so far in that which could not possibly be done, there is no mention: Indeed *Crysologus* says, *seva passionis procella turbaverat*, that a bitter Storm of Passion and Consternation had so disorder'd them, as that no Faculty of theirs could perform their right Function: & *præfervose cecutiebant*, Earnestness had so discompos'd and amaz'd them, as they discern'd nothing clearly, nor did nothing orderly. Another inconsiderate Action of these Women was, the removing the Stone of the *Sepulchre*, for they had prepar'd

par'd their Gums, and were on the way to the *Sepulchre* before they thought of that; then they stop, and say one to another, *who shall roll away the Stone from the Sepulchre*. Yet they still go on, and their Love answers the Objection, not knowing how it should be done; but yet resolving to go through all Difficulties, but never think how they should pass the Guard that was set at the Tomb. But when they came there, they found the Guard affrighted and remov'd, and the Stone roll'd away; for a little before they arriv'd there had been a great *Earthquake*, and an *Angel* descending from *Heaven* had roll'd away the Stone and sat upon it; with the Terror of his Appearance and the *Earthquake*, the Soldiers were astonish'd, and were like dead Men; and some of them ran to the *High-Priest* and told what had happen'd: Hereupon the Women finding the Door open, enter'd into the *Sepulchre*, and missing the Body of *Jesus*, *Mary Magdalen* ran to the *Eleven Apostles*, complaining that the Body of our *Lord* was not to be found; they thought this Story the Product of a weak and frightned Fancy; however *Peter* and *John* ran as fast as they could to see; for the unexpected-

expectedness of the Relation, the Wonder of the Story, and the sadness of the Person, mov'd them. They presently hasten'd to the Garden, but *John* being the younger and the nimbler, out-ran his Companion and came first thither, where he only peep'd but went not in, either out of a Fear in himself, or a great Reverence to our *Saviour*; *Peter*, tho' behind in his way, was before in his Zeal; and being older and more considerate, came and resolutely enter'd into the *Sepulchre*, where he found nothing but the Linnen Cloaths lying together in one Place, and the Napkin that had been about his Head wrapp'd together in another; which being disposed with so much Care and Order, shew'd that our *Saviour's* Body was not taken away by Thieves, (as the Jews would have it) who use to be more careful in consulting their own Safety and Escape, than of leaving things orderly dispos'd behind them.

By this Time *Mary Magdalen* was come back again to the *Sepulchre* where the other Women had stay'd for her, and then the *Angel* speaks to them, and taxes them of another gross Absurdity, and rebukes them of it, *Why seek ye the living amongst the dead?* Why him who
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is the Son of the living God, the Prince of Life, who hath Life in himself, and who is Life it self, amongst the Tombs of dead Mortals? What makes you think of arming him with Gums against Putrefaction, who told you before he was not subject to Corruption but would rise again? *M. Magdalen* also fell into such another Error: For when the *Angel* had told her at the Sepulchre, *He is not here, for He is risen, as He said*; yet when she came running to *Peter*, she said nothing of the *Resurrection*, never thought of that, but pour'd her self out in that Lamentation, *they have taken away our Lord*. Whereas if she had consider'd, she must necessarily have known from the *Angel's* Words, that no Man had taken away the *Lord*, that no Man had laid him any where else, but that by his own Power he was risen: But as in this Storm of Passion, they left *Christ's* Promise, that he would rise, unconsider'd, never remember'd the rolling of the Stone from the Door of the Sepulchre, neither did they consider the Impossibility of coming to *Christ's* Body to do the Office they intended: Their Devotion was awake, but their Consideration was not so; however they did not lose all the Benefits of their pious and devout

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Intention; for the *Angel* did not forbear to comfort them with, *Do not ye fear*: Let them continue in Fear that remain in Unbelief, and have no God to comfort themselves in. Let those mercenary Soldiers that are hir'd to watch the Sepulcher fear, and never recover; but why should *You* fear who see none but us, your Fellow-Citizens in the Service of God, if your Conversation be in Heaven, as it is, if you do truly seek that *Jesus* who is risen that he might go thither.

It seems the other Women, who came with *Mary Magdalen*, and stay'd till *Peter* and *John* had been there to make Trial of *Mary Magdalen's* Report, as they were speedy in coming, and diligent in searching *Christ*, so they were in haste to be gone when they could not find him, and fearful of farther seeking, and their Departure commends *Mary Magdalen's* staying behind: To the Grave she came before them, from the Grave she went to tell them, thither she returns with them, and there she stays behind them; a stronger Affection fix'd her, and so fix'd her, that she had not Power to remove thence.

To stay whilst Company stays, that is the *World's* Love, but *Peter* is gone,
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and *John* is gone, and the *Women* are gone, and she left alone; and to stay alone shews constant Love. She stood and wept, she wish'd to find *Christ*, and therefore wept for his Absence; whom she dearly lov'd whilst she had him, she bitterly bewail'd him she thought lost; and having lost the Sight of her Life, she desir'd to dwell in the Dark, chusing *Christ's* Tomb for her best Home, and there stood weeping; she abandon'd the Living for the Company of the Dead; and now it seems that even the Dead have forsaken her, since the Body she seeks is taken away from her: It was Love induc'd her to stand, and Sorrow forc'd her to weep; her Eye was watchful to seek, whom her Heart most lov'd to enjoy; and her Feet in a Readiness to run, if her Eye could chance to espye him. But as she watch'd to find her lost Lord, she wept for having lost whom she had lov'd, for as first she mourn'd for the Departure of his Soul out of his Body, so now she lamented the taking his Body out of the Grave; for tho' her first Sorrow was because she could not enjoy him *alive*, yet she hop'd at least to have found him *dead*; to which purpose she had prepar'd her *Spices*, and provided her *Oyntments*, to pay

pay him the last Duties: And tho' *Joseph* and *Nicodemus* had already bestow'd a hundred Pound of Myrrhe and Aloes, which was as well apply'd as Art and Devotion could desire, yet such was her Love, that she would have thought any Quantity too little without the Addition of her own; she came therefore now intending to embalm his Corps, as she had before anointed his Feet; and as in the Spring of her Felicity she had washed his Feet with her Tears, bewailing unto him the Death of her own Soul, so now she came in the Depth of her Misery to shed them again for the Death of his Body. But when she saw the Grave open'd, and the Body gone, the Labour of Embalming was prevented: But the Cause of her Tears increased, and tho' she found no Use for the Spices, yet she found how to employ her Tears, now as much afflicted for his Loss, as before she had been pleas'd at his Presence. But since weeping without searching was to no Purpose, her weeping hindered not her Inquiry, her Sorrow dull'd not her Diligence; she often stoop'd and look'd into the Grave; but why should she now look in, since *Peter* had been in the Tomb, and *John* had look'd in before? However she will not trust

either *Peter's* or *John's* Eyes, nay she will not trust her self, she will suspect her own Senses, she will rather think she looked not well before, than leave off looking. And thus hoping in Despair, and despairing in Hope, she stood at the *Sepulcher* without Fear, because she thought now nothing left that ought to be fear'd. But with what Hope or with what Heart could she stand alone at the Tomb, when the Disciples were gone; for her Eyes had seen, and *Peter's* Hands had felt, that the *Lord* was not there? The empty Winding-sheet did also confirm it, and yet nothing could make her believe it; her disappointed Love had drown'd both her Mind and Memory so deep in Sorrow, and so amaz'd her Senses by his Absence, that all remembrance of his former Promises was diverted with the Crowd of present Troubles; for doubtless, had she remember'd him, as she should have done, she would not have thought the Tomb a fit Place to seek him in, neither would she have mourn'd for him as dead, and remov'd by the Treachery of others, but joy'd in him, as reviv'd by his own Power; but Sorrow had quite stupify'd her Senses, distemper'd her Thoughts, discourag'd her Hopes, awak'd her Passions, and left her

her no other Liberty than to weep, she wept therefore; and as she was weeping, she stoop'd down, and look'd into the *Sepulcher*, and saw two Angels in White, one at the Head, and the other at the Feet, where the Body of *Jesus* had been laid: Angels in a Grave! a strange Sight! never seen before: That sure was a Place fitter for Worms than Angels. They were in White too, a Colour expressive of Joy, *Heaven* mourn'd at his *Passion*, the Eclipse of that Day shew'd them all in Black, but at the *Resurrection* they rejoyce, they are now all in White, even the Heavens and Angels. They were sitting, the one at the Head, the other at the Feet, which may be ferr'd to *Mary Magdalen's* having anointed his Head and his Feet; they sat at these two Places, as it were to acknowledge so much for her Sake: Between the *Angels* there was no striving for Places; he that sat at the *Feet* was as well contented, as he that sat at the *Head*; but with us, both Angels would have been at the Head, never an one at the Feet: *And they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?* They asked her, Why she wept? believing she had no Cause, all was in Error, Tears of Grief, but false Grief, imagining him to be dead that was

alive; she wept because she found the Grave empty, which, God forbid, she should have found full, for then *Christ* must have been dead still; for want of Belief in his Resurrection, she believed he was carried away; she err'd in so believing; there was Error in her *Love*, but there was Love in her Error; and it was a great Argument of her Love, to call him *Lord*, after he had suffer'd the most opprobrious and ignominious Death, such as would have made many blush to own him.

When she look'd first she saw no Angel, and then of a sudden looking down, she saw two; yet the Suddenness and Gloriousness of the Sight mov'd her not at all, she seem'd to have no Sense of it, but wept on, which was strange; for here methinks her good Fortune exceeds her Hopes, and where her last Sorrow was brought, her first Succour arises, for she sought but one, and she found two; one dead Body was the Cause of her Errand, and she found two alive; her Weeping was for a Man, and her Tears have found Angels, who invite her to a Parly, and seem to pity her Case. They sit at the Tomb, to shew they are no Strangers to her Loss, they spake to her, as tho' they had some special Message to deli-

deliver to her ; and if she had ask'd them concerning her Master, they were the likeliest to give her a satisfactory Answer, and to have told her the Cause of their Coming, and the Reason of her *Lord's* Remove ; but nothing could move her to admit Comfort, or to entertain any Company, for having vow'd her self to *Christ* alone, except to him, she will neither lend her Ear, nor borrow others Help : Besides, whatever they could tell her, if they told her not of him ; and whatsoever they told her of him, if they told her not where he was, both their telling, and her hearing, were but a wasting of Time ; for she came not thither to see Angels, but him who made both her and them, and to whom she ow'd more than to Men and Angels ; and being full of wavering Uncertainties, and perplexed Thoughts, she began to think, if she staid there by the Tomb where he was not, she should never find him ; and if she would go farther to seek, she knew not whither ; to part with the Tomb was Death to her, and to stand helpless by it would do no good ; so that all her Comfort was that she must either stay there without Help, or go without Hope : Then she blam'd her self, for leaving him when

she had him; thus to lament him now she had lost him, and for departing when it was time to stay, and returning when it was too late to help; forgetting what her Master used to say, when he told her, *He would rise again the third Day*: But why doth she torment her self with these tragical Surmises? Does she think the *Angels* would sit still if their *God* were not well, did they serve him after his Fasting, and would they despise him after his Decease? If in the Garden he might have had Twelve Legions of *Angels*, (as he said) Is his Power so gone with the Life of his Body, that he could not now command them? Was there an Angel found to help *Daniel* to his Dinner, to save *Toby* from the Fish, and to defend *Balaam's* poor Beast from his Master's Rage? And is the *Lord* of *Angels* of so little Concern, that if his Body wanted it, no Angel would defend it? But she saw two there to honour his *Tomb*; and how much more careful would they be to do Homage to his Person? She might well think they would not smile, if she had just Occasion to weep, they would not so gloriously sit in white, if a black and mourning Weed did better become them.

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But why did her Sorrow question so much about the Place where they had laid her *Lord*? might not she better suppose, that he was in *Paradise*; for since he came to repair *Adam's* Ruins, and to be the *common Parent* of our Redemption, as *Adam* was of our Original Infection, 'twas reasonable, that having endur'd all his Life the Penalty of *Adam's* Exile, he should after Death re-enter upon a Possession of that Inheritance which *Adam* lost. And besides, if her Sorrow at the Cross had not made her as deaf, as at the Tomb it made her forgetful, she could not but have remember'd what he himself said to one of the *Thieves*, *That the same Day he should be with him in Paradise.*

Whilst *Mary Magdalen* thus lost herself in a Labyrinth of Doubts, mixing Tears with her Words, and warming them with Sighs, she saw the Angels with a kind of Reverence, as tho' they had done Honour to one behind her; whereupon she turn'd back and saw *Jesus* standing, but knew not that it was *him*. For when *Jesus* saw that nothing would give her Comfort but himself, that no *Angels*, no Sight, no Speech of others would serve, then her *Lord* comes, and from seeking him dead, she finds

finds him alive; but first he comes unknown, stands by her, and she did not suspect that it was he; she not only knew not that 'twas *Jesus*, but mistook him for the *Gardiner*: Proper enough it was, and fitted well with the Time and Place, it was the Spring, and in a Garden, and she did not mistake in taking him for a *Gardiner*, tho' she might seem to err in some Sense; yet in another Sense she was in the right: For in a Spiritual Sense, *Christ* may be said to be a *Gardiner*, for of the first, the fairest Garden that ever was, *Paradise*, he was the *Gardiner*, it was of his Planting, and ever since it is he that makes all our *Gardens* green, sends us Yearly the Spring, and all the *Herbs* and *Flowers* we gather in the Season: And 'tis he that gardens our Souls too, and weeds out of them whatsoever is prejudicial to or destructive of his Word sown in our Hearts. He sows them with the true Roots of all *Christian Virtues*, waters them with the Dew of his Grace, and makes them bring forth Fruit to *Eternal Life*.

Besides all this, *Christ* on the Day of his Resurrection was most properly a *Gardiner*, and that a strange One, who made such an Herb grow out of the Ground that Day, as the like was never seen before,

fore, (except in the Instance of *Lazarus* rais'd by him) a dead Body to shoot forth alive from the Grave.

But was it possible that *Mary Magdalen* could forget *Jesus*, whose Faith had fix'd him in her Understanding, her Love in her Will, both Fear and Hope in her Memory, for him her Eye weeps, her Thoughts grieve, her whole *Body* fainteth, her Soul languisheth, and there was no Part of her that was not busie about him; and yet she had forgotten him; his Countenance and Voice assure her, his Words witness it, her Eyes behold him, and yet she knew him not: But there was such a Shower of Tears between her and him, and her Eyes were so dimm'd with Weeping for him, that tho' she saw the Man, she could not discern *Jesus*; and therefore as he seems to her a Stranger, he asketh the same Question of her which the Angels had, only quickens it a little with *Woman why weepest thou, whom seekest thou?* If she seeks *Christ*, why knows she him not? And if she knows him, why does she seek him whom she sees? It is a common thing with us to seek a Thing, and when we have found it, not to know we have.

Scarce

Scarce three Days ago she saw him hanging on a Tree with his Head crown'd with Thorns, his Eyes full of Sorrow, his Ears fill'd with Blasphemies, his Mouth fed with Gall, his whole Person mangled and disfigured, his Arms and Legs rack'd with violent Pulls, his Hands and Feet boar'd with Nails, his Side wounded with a Spear, his whole Body torn with Scourges, and goar'd with Blood; and yet Christ asketh her, *Why she weeps?* And not without Cause doth he ask this Question, because she would have *Christ* alive, and yet wept because she did not find him dead: She was sorry he was not there, and for that very Cause she should rather have been glad; for if he were dead, she might have expected to see him there, but his not being there, was a Sign he was alive: But she still taking *Jesus* to be the Gardiner, said unto him, *If thou hast carried him from hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away:* To ask *Christ* for *Christ* seems somewhat strange, which however it falls out in other Matters, here it was safe, even when we seek *Christ*, to pray *Christ* to help us to find *Christ*, for we cannot come to him except he draws us: But *Mary Magdalen* seems something more harsh to *Christ* than

than to the Angels, to them she complains of *others*, saying, *they* have taken him away: But she seems to charge *Christ*, at least to suspect him of the Fact, as if he had look'd like one that had been a Robber of Graves; her *if* implies as much, but Love, as it fears where it need not, so it suspects without Cause. But St. *Bernard* speaks to Christ for her: *Domine amor quem habebat in Te, & dolor quem habebat de Te, excusat eam apud Te, si fortè erravit circa Te.* The Love she bore him, the Sorrow she had for him, may excuse her, if she were in any Error concerning him, in her saying, *Si sustulisti.* Her Affections seem to transport her, (as she says) no Man knows what, to one a meer Stranger to her, and she to him, she talks to one thrice under the Name of Him, If thou hast taken him, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will fetch him; alas poor Woman, she was not able to lift him, there goes more than one or two either to the carrying of a Corps; as for his, it had more than a Hundred Pound weight of Myrrh and other Odours upon it.

She charged not the Angels with his Removal, nor seem'd to mistrust them, for she did not request them to inform
her

her where he was laid : but now she judgeth the Gardiner to be the Author of her Loss, being almost fully perswaded, that he was privy to the Place, and acquainted with the Action ; and tho' she was not altogether in the right, yet she was not much in the wrong, and err'd with such aim, that she miss'd very little of the Truth.

But since she was so desirous to know where *Jesus* lay, Why did not she name him when she ask'd for him ? She says only she will take *Him* away, her Courage seems above the Strength of a Woman, neither does she remember that all Women are weak, she promiseth without Condition, she makes no Exception, as if nothing were impossible that her Love suggesteth. It was indeed wonderful, that *Love* had so bereav'd her of Sense, that tho' she saw the Angels, she could not see *Jesus*. She sought for one, whom when she had found she knew not ; and not knowing him when she found him, she sought for him when she had him : But alas, how could poor *Mary* believe, that after her *Lord* had liv'd so long, labour'd so much, died with such Pain, and shed such showers of Blood, he should come to no higher a Preferment, than to be a *Gardiner* ;
Was

Was a sorry Garden the best Inheritance her Love could have imagin'd for him, or a *Gardiner's* Office the highest Dignity she could allow him? It had been better he had liv'd to have been *Lord* of her Castle of *Magdalen*, than with his Death so dearly to have purchased so mean a Post.

But her Mistake hath in it a farther Mystery, tho' her Sight was deceiv'd, she thought not amiss; For as our first Father in his State of Innocence was plac'd in a Garden of Pleasure, and his first Office was that of *Gardiner*; so the first Man that ever was in *Glory*, appear'd first in a Garden, and presented himself in the likeness of a *Gardiner*, that the beginning of *Glory* might resemble that of Innocence and Grace. And as that *Gardiner* was the foil of Mankind, the Parent of Sin, and Author of Death; so this was the Raisher of our Ruins, the Ransom of our Offence, and the Restorer of Life. In a *Garden*, Man was deceiv'd and ensnar'd by the Devil. In a Garden, *Christ* was betray'd and apprehended by the *Jews*. In a Garden, *Adam* was condemn'd to eat his Bread in the Sweat of his Brows; And after a Free-Gift of the Bread of Angels in the last Supper, *Christ* did
earn

earn it us, with a *Bloody Sweat* of his whole Body; And as by disobedient eating the Fruit of a *Tree*, our Right to the Garden of Paradise was forfeited by *Adam*; so by the obedient Death of *Christ upon a Tree*, a far better Right is now settled; And as when *Adam* sinn'd in the Garden of Paradise, he was then apparell'd in the Skin of a dead Beast, that his Cloathing might betoken his Grave, and his Livery of Death agree with his Condemnation to die; so to defray the Debt of that Sin, in this Garden *Christ* lay clad in the dead Man's Shrowd, and buried in his Tomb, that as our Evils began, so they might end, and such Places and Means as were the Premises of our Misery, might be also the end of our Misfortune; and for these Reasons *Mary Magdalen* was allow'd to mistake, that we might be inform'd of the Mystery, and see how aptly the Course of our Redemption did answer the Process of our Condemnation.

But why could not *Mary Magdalen* as well see what in truth *Christ* was, as what in show he seem'd to be? But she thought so to have found him as she left him, and she sought him as she saw him last, being so overcome with Sorrow for his Death, that she had neither room
nor

nor respite in her Mind, for any hope of his Life; and therefore she ask'd the Gardiner, *If thou hast carried him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him.*

But one would be ready to think her Master was very unkind to leave her so long without Comfort, and to punish her so much, who so well deserv'd Pardon : She did not follow the Tide of his better Fortune, to shift Sail with the Stream ; she left him not in his lowest Ebb, she revolted not from his last Etremity ; in his Life she serv'd him with her Goods, in his Death she departed not from his Cross ; and after Death she came to dwell with him in his Grave.

But now *Christ* begins to take Pity on her, her Tears were too mighty Orators to let her Suit fall, tho' they pleaded at the most rigorous Bar, they tie the Tongues of all Accusers, and soften the Rigour of the severest Judge, they win the Invincible, and bind the Omnipotent ; when they seem most Pittiful, they have the greatest Power, and being most Forsaken, they are more Victorious : For this Water her Heart had been long a Limbeck, sometimes distilling it from the Weeds of her own Offences, with the true Fire of Contrition, sometimes
O of

of the Flowers of Spiritual Comforts, with the Flames of Contemplation; and at other times out of the bitter Herbs of her Master's Miseries, with the Heat of a tender Compassion. Her Tears, that were heretofore the *Proctors* for her Brother's Life, were now the Invited of those Angels in the Monument for her Comfort, and the Suiters that shall be rewarded with the first Sight of her reviv'd Saviour. For when Christ saw all was in vain, that neither Men nor Angels, nor himself (so long as he kept himself a *Gardiner*) could get any Thing out of her, but that her Lord was gone, he was taken away, and that nothing but *Jesus* could yield her any Comfort; He is no longer able to contain, but even discloses himself, and that by his Voice; And now *Christ* is found alive, that was sought dead. A Cloud may be so thick as to hide the Sun from our Sight, the Sun must scatter that Cloud, and then we may see its Light: Here is an Example of it: A thick Cloud of Heaviness had so obscured *Mary Magdalen's* Eyes, that she could not see him thro' it, this one word, these two Syllables *Ma-ry* from his Mouth, dispels all the Darknes; no sooner had his Voice founded in her Ears, but it drove away all the Mist, dries up
her

her Tears, opens her Eyes, and she knows him, and answer'd him with her wonted Salutation, *Rabboni*. Thus the *Gardiner* did his Part, brought *Mary Magdalen* from a dead and drooping, to a lively and cheerful Estate; She sought *Christ* dead and imprison'd in a Stony-Grave, and finds him both alive, and at full liberty: She sought him in a Shroud more like a Leper than himself, left as the Model of the utmost Misery, and the only Pattern of the bitterest Unhappiness; and now she finds him invested with Robes of Glory, the Owner and Giver of all Felicity. She that had so long sought without finding, wept without Comfort, and call'd without Answer, is now fully satisfied with this one word, *Mary*, having heard him call her in his wonted Manner, and usual Voice, this one word restor'd her Senses, enlighten'd her Mind, quicken'd her Heart, and reviv'd her Soul.

But why did *Christ* chuse to be made known to her by the Ear, rather than by the Eye, by Hearing rather than by Appearing, because her Eyes were holden, till her Ears were open'd? The Philosophers tell us, *Hearing* is the Sense of Wisdom, and in Matters of Faith the *Ear* goes first, and is of more use, and

to be trusted before the *Eye*. No sooner had *Christ's* Voice founded in her Ears, but she knew forthwith it was he ; and being ravish'd with his Voice, and impatient of Delays, a sudden Joy so overprest her, by so unexpected a Presence, and so many Miracles laid at once before her, that she could no more proceed in her own, than give *Christ* leave to go forward with his Speech ; but falling at his sacred Feet, she offer'd to bathe them with Tears of Joy, and to kiss his late *grievous*, but now *most glorious* Wounds. But Christ forbad her, saying, *Touch me not* : This seem'd a strange Rebuke to *Mary*, who when dead in Sin, she touch'd his mortal Feet, and now being alive in Grace, she was denied to touch his glorious Feet, being commanded from that for which she was before commended by our *Saviour*. Alas ! what Harm had there been if he had suffer'd her to touch him ? Before his Passion, many desir'd and strove to touch him, and there went Virtue out of him, even while he was *Mortal*, but now he was *Immortal* in all Likelihood much more Virtue would proceed : Christ was not used to be so tender of being touch'd ; at several Times and Places he suffer'd the rude Multitude to crowd and thrust him, and much ruder Touches

Touches at his Passion : Why suffer'd he them *then*, and why suffer'd he not her *now* ? She had touch'd before both his Head and his Feet, and anointed them both, and she now brought Odours in her Hand to Re-embalm him : It was early, and yet by that Time she had given very good Proofs of her Love : She was early up, came first to the Grave, return'd and call'd *Peter* and *John*, staid last at the Grave, had been at such Cost, taken such Pains, had wept so much as to refuse Comfort, even when offer'd by Angels ; 'till she had found *Christ* she was a Stranger to Consolation, and now having found him, that she must not touch him, seems very hard ; one poor Touch had been but an easie Recompence for all her Pains and Sorrow : But if we look into the Reason *Christ* gives, it is yet more strange, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascend- ed* ; as if he had said, when he was Ascended then she should ; but if standing upon Earth by him, he is not to be touch'd when he is taken up into Heaven, no Arm can reach him there.

There is a Time and Place for *Noli me tangere*. The World began with a *Noli me tangere*. The first Words

God spake then were, *Touch not the forbidden Fruit* : But Christ is not the forbidden Tree but the Tree of Life, to be touch'd and tasted, that we may live by him ; but this *touch me not* was not on *Christ's* Part, but on *Mary's*, no Lett in him to be touch'd, the Lett was in her, she might not touch him ; would *Christ* have Men to touch him, and not Women ; for St. *Thomas* put his whole Hand into the Place of his Wounds, and put him to no Pain at all ; and certain *Women* met him in the way after his Resurrection, amongst which was *Mary Magdalen*, and he then suffer'd them to touch him, and take him by the Feet : So that it seems this Prohibition was not Real but Personal, not absolutely, but not at that time ; which shews all was not well with *Mary Magdalen*, something was amiss, she must have been to blame in the Manner of her Offer ; she must have been a little too forward it may be, and not have us'd all the Respect she should have done : For as soon as *Christ* cry'd *Mary*, she answer'd, with her wonted Term, *Rabboni* ; and as she saluted him with her usual Word, so after her Custom she went towards him, and would have touch'd him, not in such a Manner as was fitting to be observ'd, nor with that Regard which his
new

new glorified Estate seem'd justly to require, for that which was enough to *Christ* a few Days past, was not so now: She poor Woman was defective in her Judgment out of an Excess of her Affection, she thought he had been *Rabboni* still: It seem'd to her that *Christ* was now as her Brother *Lazarus* was after his Resurrection; that *Christ* had risen neither more nor less, but just the same he was before, to be saluted, approach'd, and touch'd as formerly he had been.

It seems she was not before so carry'd away with Sorrow, but she was now as far gone in the other of Joy, and so forgot her self in offering to touch him no otherwise than she did before: Her Case was like *St. Peter's* in the Mount, who knew not what he said, when he propos'd the building of three Tabernacles; she knew not what she did, being so surpris'd with the sudden Joy, as she had no Leisure to recollect her self, to weigh the wonderful great Change this Day wrought in him: For when her Judgment was better settled, she did touch him, but then it was upon her Knees, down at his Feet, another Manner of Gesture than as it seems she first offer'd.

'Tis true he gave *St. Thomas* leave to touch, whose Faith was in his Fingers

Ends ; he then believ'd not, was in Doubt, thought he had been a Ghost, and to clear that Doubt he was suffer'd to touch him : *St. Thomas*, and *Mary Magdalen*, or whoever touch'd *Christ* on Earth, if they had not been more happy to touch him with their *Faith*, than with their *Hands*, they had receiv'd no Good at all by it ; it was much better with Faith to touch the Hemm of his Garment, than without it to touch any Part of his Body ; touching was the proper Cure for *St. Thomas's* Disease ; but so it was not for *Mary Magdalen*, who was sure the Voice she heard was that of *Rabboni*, she had no need to be confirm'd in that. Her Disease was of another Sort, not want of Faith, but want of due Regard ; *Thomas* touch'd because he believ'd not, she touch'd not because she misbeliev'd ; he touch'd that he might know *Christ* was risen ; she touch'd not that she might know, he was not so risen as she imagin'd, that is, as in former times she knew him. And *Christ* did hereby silently tell her, there was a great Difference between a glorious and a mortal Body, between the Condition of momentary and eternal Life, and that she should rather with Reverence fall down afar off, than with such Familiarity approach to touch him ; that she was first
to

to embrace him with a firm Faith, then she should touch him with more worthy *Hands*; and therefore he commanded her to go about that which requir'd more haste, to run to his Brethren and inform them, that he would go before them into *Galilee*, and there they should see him; and so *Mary Magdalen*, perfering her *Lord's* Will to her own, obey'd his Command in departing, but thought her self but an unfortunate Messenger of most joyful News, being banished from her Master's Presence, to carry News of his Resurrection; and going in this perplex'd Manner, she meets by the way the other holy Women (who first came with her to the Grave) whom the Angels had then assur'd of *Christ's* Resurrection, and as they all pass'd towards the Disciples, *Jesus* met them, saying, *All Haile, and so they came near, and took hold of his Feet*, and ador'd him; then he said unto them, *Fear not, go tell my Brethren that I go into Galilee, there they shall see me.*

Thus Christ apply'd a Lenitive to assuage *Mary Magdalen's* Pain, after the sharp Corrosive which had griev'd her tender Wound, which was made rather by Ignorance than Error, and was as soon cur'd as known, and therefore she was now admitted to kiss his Feet.

She

She had indeed great Favours granted her, not only to see Angels, but to see *Christ*, and him first of all; and more than that, to be employ'd by *Christ* upon a heavenly Errand, and no Reason for this but that she lov'd much. We cannot say she believ'd much, since she believ'd no more than just as much as the *High Priest* would have the World believe, that he was taken away by Night: Her Faith cannot be commended, but her Love cannot but be prais'd, of which she gave good Proofs to *Christ* both living and dead. St. *Augustin* tells us the Reason why *Christ* suffer'd her not to touch him, was to wean her from all sensual and fleshly touching, to teach her a new and true Touch; for her touching of his Body, which she desir'd, would last but forty Days, and he therefore taught her another Touch, that might serve to the World's End.

But St. *Gregory* says, *Christ*'s forbidding her to touch him, was to save Time, he being desirous to dispatch her upon an Errand better pleasing to him, and that requir'd more haste; he was careful that his Friends might receive Comfort with the first, and therefore he bids her go with all speed, for that it would do *them* more good to hear of his Rising,

sing, than it would do *her* to stand and touch him. It was a great Honour to *Mary Magdalen*, to be the Messenger of these blessed Tidings; there is no harsh Term in this Message; for tho' his Disciples fled from him, forsook him, and forswore him, he hath forgotten and forgiven all, he does not cast them off, as they did him, but sends to them by the Name of *Brethren*: But this special Honour that was done to *Mary Magdalen*, was withal a silent blaming the Disciples, for sitting at Home so drooping in a Corner, that *Christ* not finding any of them, is feign to seek a new *Apostle*, and finding her where he should have found them and did not, to send to them by the Hand of her whom he first found at the Sepulchre, and by this *Mary Magdalen* ought to be satisfied; for to be thus sent to be the Messenger of these blessed Tidings, is a more special Honour done to her, than if she had been let alone, and been admitted to touch *Christ*, which she so eagerly desir'd; for we may be sure *Christ* would never have enjoin'd her to leave the better and take the worse, to forbear to touch him, to make the more haste to them, if that had not then been the better Employment. The Reason why *Christ* bids her go and
tell

tell them, *That I ascend*, was, because he knew they would say, Oh ! He is risen, we shall have his Company again as we had before ; but by sending them Word of his Ascending, he gave them Warning betimes, that he Rose not to make any Abode with them, or to converse with them on Earth, as formerly he had done. He knew this would be a hard Lesson, and would trouble them much, for they were still over addicted to his bodily Being with them ; here they would have detain'd him, built him a Tabernacle here, and by their good Will, would never have let him go from hence.

This was their Error, and to rid them of this earthly Mind, thus striving to affix him, and keep him here on Earth, he shews them they were much mistaken, and sets them right. When *Christ* was risen, he was not far from ascending ; and if we be risen with him, we must no more look down into the Grave, nor fix our selves on Earth, but strive to ascend with him also.

All Things in *Heaven* and *Earth* do so, rising they ascend presently : In *Heaven* the *Stars* are no sooner risen above the *Horizon*, but they are in their Ascent, and never leave ascending, till they come to the highest *Vertical* Point. In
Earth,

Earth, the little Spires that peep out of the Ground now at this Time (Nature's Time of her yearly Resurrection) they are no sooner out but up they shoot, and never leave to aspire till they have attain'd the full Pitch of the Growth allow'd them by Nature; so should we from our Birth always ascend, nor ever stop, till we reach the highest Perfection our Nature is capable of.

In our selves it is not strange for earthly Men to have earthly Minds, and having Clay for our Original, that our Souls should cleave to the Dust; so it is with us, tho' so it ought not to be: The very *Heathen Poet* saw, that tho' we be made of Earth, we are not made for Earth: That an *Heavenly Soul* was not put into an *earthly Body*, to the end the earthly Body should draw it down to the *Earth*; but rather that the Soul should lift it up to Heaven, and so much is shewn by our *os sublime & vultus ad sidera*, the very Frame of our Body that bears us up thitherward; for tho' we are born in this World, and live in it, yet we belong to another Corporation, we are Denizens of another Country, and Free of that *City* which is above, whose Builder is the *Lord*.

Thus

Thus we see by what happened to *Mary Magdalen*, and the other devout Women, that they were not only capable of Religious Offices, but that they were *early* in their Religious Work, they began *betimes*. There is but one *Parable* that tells us, That they that came *late* to the Labour, were as well rewarded as the *earliest*, and that is no Encouragement to late Comers, as not so much respecting the different Ages of a Man, but different Year of the World. And let that *Parable* be understood after the vulgar Way of interpreting it, yet we should remember, that these that were call'd at the last Hours came as soon as they were call'd. *Mary Magdalen*, and these Women, were also earnest and sedulous; and tho' their Devotion was carried upon Things that could not be intirely done, yet *God* cast no Cloud of Discouragement upon them, but exalted and maintained their Holy Confidence, and accepted their Devotion; for where the Root and Substance of the Work is Piety, *God* often overlooks some Errors in Circumstance as inconsiderable.

Let therefore *Mary Magdalen* be our Pattern, let us learn from her, that we may find *Christ*; if we seek him *early* and diligently, we shall meet him: Let

us learn of her to fear no Dangers in quest of *Christ*, and to think of no Comforts without him; let us rise with her in the Morning of our good Motions, and let them not sleep in sloth, when Diligence may execute them; let us run with Repentance to our sinful Hearts, which instead of being *Temples* (through our Faults) are become *Tombs* to *Christ*: Let us roll away the Stone of our former Hardness, remove all heavy Loads of *Sin* that oppresses us, and look into our Souls, whether we can there find *Christ*: If he be not there within us, let us stand Weeping without, and see him in other Creatures; seek him, and not his; seek him for himself; and not for his Gifts. If our *Faith* have found *Christ* in a Cloud, let our *Hope* seek to see him: If our *Hope* hath led us to see him, let our *Love* seek farther into him: Let us seek him truly, and no other for him; seek him purely, and no other Thing with him; seek him only, and nothing besides him; and if at the first Search he appear not, think not much to persevere in Tears, and to continue our seeking as *Mary Magdalen* did. Let us stand upon the Earth, tread under us all worldly Vanities, and touch them only with the Soles of our Feet; that is, with the lowest and least part of
our

our Affections; and to look better into the *Tomb*, let us bow down our Necks to the Yoke of Humility, that with lowly Looks we may find him, whom swelling and haughty Thoughts have driven away: And if we can perceive in the Tombs of our Hearts, the Presence of *Christ's* two first Messengers; that is, at the Feet, Sorrow for the bad that is past; and at the Head, Desire to a better that is to come; entertain them with Sighs, and welcome them with penitent Tears, and let us not cease seeking till we find *Christ*.

Thus preparing our selves with Diligence, coming with Speed, standing with fix'd Hopes, and stooping with humble Hearts, if we crave with *Mary Magdalen*, no other Thing of *Jesus* but *Jesus* himself, he will answer our Tears with his Presence, and continue with us for ever.





Of the LIFE and CONVERSION
of St. Paul.

ST. PAUL was born at *Tarsus*, the Metropolis of *Cilicia*, a City vastly rich and populous, wherein an *Academy* was furnished with Schools of Learning, where there were Scholars that excelled in all Parts of Polite Literature. Those of other Places, and even *Rome* it self, was beholden to it, as *Strabo* tells us, for many of its best Professors, and therefore it was made a *Roman Munificium*, invested with many Privileges, by *Julius Caesar* and *Augustus*, who granted to its Inhabitants the Honours and Immunities of Citizens of *Rome*.

The Parents of St. Paul were *Jews* of the Tribe of *Benjamin*; we find him described in Scripture by two Names, the one *Hebrew*, the other *Latin*, probably referring both to his *Jewish* and *Roman* Capacity; the one *Saul*, a Name frequent in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, ever
P since

since the first *King of Israel* of that Name was chosen out of that *Tribe* : In Memory whereof they were wont to give their Children that Name at their *Circumcision* : His other Name *Paul* was assum'd by him as some think at his Conversion, to shew his Humility, tho' others think he had two Names given him at his Circumcision, *Saul* relating to his *Jewish* Original, and *Paul* referring to the *Roman* Corporation where he was born : Or if this Name was taken by him afterwards, it was probably done at his Conversion, according to the Custom of the *Hebrews*, who us'd many Times upon extraordinary Occasions, especially upon entering into a more strict and religious Course of Life, to change their Names for new ones ; which is also usual with our *Religious* in some Orders, to change their Names, following therein this *Apostle*, who chang'd his Name from *Saul* to *Paul* after his coming into the Ministry ; and yet some think he borrow'd that Name from *Sergius Paulus* the *Roman Lieutenant* ; but St. *Chrysostome* tells us, it was from his low Stature, being but three Cubits high ; and therefore says, *Tricubitatis ille, tamen cælum ascendit* : I will not presume to clear this Difficulty, but leave it to better Judgments.

Saul

Saul in his Youth was brought up in the *Schools* of *Tarsus*, fully instructed in all the *Liberal Arts* and *Sciences*: He was also taught a particular Trade, according to the *known* Maxim and Principle of the *Jews*, *That he who does not teach his Son a Trade, learns him to be a Thief*. They thought it not only fit, but a necessary Part of Education, for the wisest and most learned *Rabbins* to be brought up to Manual Trades, whereby, if there was Occasion, they might be able to maintain themselves; which Custom was taken up by the *Christians*, especially by the *Monks* of Primitive Times, and is continued to this Day amongst the Reformed Orders in *God's Church*; who together with their strict Profession, and almost incredible Exercises of Devotion, many take upon them particular Trades, whereat they daily work, not for maintaining themselves in particular, but for the Benefit of their whole Community. The Trade of *Saul* was that of a *Tent-maker*, whereat he wrought, even after he was call'd to be an *Apostle*; and tho' this was but a mean Course of Life, yet it was a gainful Trade, especially in those Countries where frequent Use was made of Tents.

Saul having ran thro' the whole Course of his Studies, and laid the sure Foundations of human Learning at *Tarsus*; he was by his Parents sent to *Jerusalem* to be perfected in the Study of the *Law*, and put under the Tutorage of *Gama-liel*, who was a *Doctor of Law*, and reckon'd a Person of great Wisdom and Prudence, a Man of chief Note and Authority in the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, and *President* of it when our *Blessed Saviour* was brought before it. Under this great Master was *Saul* educated in the Knowledge of the *Law*, wherein he made such large and quick Improvements, that he soon excell'd his Fellow-Pupils; and amongst the various Sects at that Time in *Jerusalem*, he was specially Educated in the Principles and Institutions of the *Pharisees*, of which Sect was both his *Father* and *Master*, whereof he became a most earnest and zealous Professor; and *Josephus*, tho' a *Pharisee*, gives this following Character of them:

Lib. 171 3. " That they were a crafty and subtil
 " Generation of Men, and so perverse
 " even to Princes themselves, that they
 " would not fear many times to affront
 " and oppose them; and so far had
 " they insinuated themselves into the
 " Affections and Estimations of the Po-
 " pulacy,

“ pulacy, that their good or ill Word
“ was enough to make or blast any one
“ with the People, who implicitly
“ would believe them, let their Report
“ be never so false or malicious”. Cer-
tain it is, They were infinitely Proud
and Insolent, Surly and Ill-natur’d, they
hated all Mankind but themselves, and
censur’d those who would not be of
their Opinion and Way, as Reprobates.
They were extream zealous to gather
Profelytes to their Party, not to make
them more Religious, but more fierce
and cruel, (much like some, who think
all *Religion* confin’d within the Bounds
of their own Sect, that none but they
were the Godly, and that all other Per-
sons were *Sons of the Earth*) and there-
fore they endeavour’d especially to in-
spire all their Party with a mighty Zeal
and Fervency against all that differed
from them; so that if any did but speak
a good Word of our Blessed Saviour,
he should presently be prosecuted to
Death.

These dogged and ill-natur’d Princi-
ples, together with their unmerciful Be-
haviour, they endeavour’d to varnish
over with a more than ordinary Pretence
and Profession of *Religion*, and were
especially diligent, in what cost them lit-
tle,

tle, the outward Instances of Religion, as frequent Fasting, long Praying, with demure and mortify'd Looks, in a whining and affected Tone. *Saul* was deeply leavened with the active and fiery Genius of this Sect, not able to bear with any opposite Party in Religion, especially if late or new; infomuch, that when the *Jews* were resolved to do Execution upon St. *Stephen*, *Saul* stood by and kept the Clothes of them that did it; whether he was any farther engaged in his Death, we know not; but this was enough, loudly to proclaim his Approbation and Consent, for *God* chiefly respects the Heart; and if the Vote be passed there, that writes the Man guilty, tho' he stirs no farther, it being easie to murder a Man by a silent Wish, or a passionate Desire. In all Moral Actions, *God* judges by the Will, and reckons the Man a Companion in the Sin, who, tho' possibly he may never actually join in it, does yet inwardly applaud and like it.

The Storm thus begun, increas'd apace, and a violent Persecution began to rise, which miserably afflicted and dispers'd the *Christians* at *Jerusalem*, in which *Saul* was a Prime Agent, raging about in all Parts with a furious and ungovernable

able Zeal, searching out the *Christians*, beating them in the *Synagogues*, compelling many to Blaspheme, imprisoning others, and procuring their Death: He was a sort of *Inquisitor* to the *High Priest*, by whom he was employ'd to find out those *Christians* who preach'd against the *Law of Moses*; and after having made a strange Havock at *Jerusalem*, he address'd himself to the *Sanhedrim*, and there took out a Commission to go down and ransack the *Synagogue* at *Damascus*, where many *Christians* that were persecuted fled for Shelter, *Saul* resolving to bring up those he found there to *Jerusalem*, in order to their Punishment and Execution: But *God* who designed him for a Work of another Nature, stopt him in his Journey; for as he was travelling with his Companions upon the Road, not far from *Damascus*, on a sudden, a Gleam of Light, which exceeded the Splendor of the Sun, darted from Heaven upon them, whereat being very strangely amaz'd and confounded, they all fell to the Ground, and a Voice call'd to him, saying, *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* To which he reply'd, *Lord, Who art thou?* Who told him, He was *Jesus* whom he persecuted, because what was

done to the Members, was done to the Head, that it was hard for him to kick against the Pricks: That he now appear'd to him, to make Choice of him for an *Apostle*, and Witness of what he had now seen, and should after hear, that he would stand by him, and preserve him, and make him a glorious Instrument for the Conversion of the *Gentiles*: This said, he asked our *Lord*, What he would have him to do? Who bad him go into the *City*, where he should receive his Answer. *Saul's* Companions, who were present at this Discourse, heard a confused Sound, but no distinct articulate Voice, neither saw they him that spoke to *Saul*; and probably they being ignorant of the *Hebrew* Language, wherein *Christ* spoke to *Saul*, they heard the Words, but knew not the Meaning of them.

Thus, when *Saul* was wasting the *Church*, dispersing the Disciples, destroying the Christians, following them from the *Synagogues* into the Streets, from thence into their Houses, when he breathed out Threatnings and Slaughter; the *Lord* without any Expostulation might have poured down Vengeance upon him, he might have commanded what Punishment he pleas'd to have serv'd the Execution

cution of Wrath against him : But if ever *Mercy* and *Judgment* met together, here it was, *Judicium Misericordiae*, & *Misericordia Judicis*, a Voice and a Stroak, the one striking down to *Earth*, the other lifting up to *Heaven*; a Light shining from *Heaven*, and a Light shining to direct him to *Heaven*; a Light shining to him that was in Darkneſs and in the Shadow of Death, to bring him from the Snare of Darkneſs into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of *God* : He that was the *Way* met him in the *Way*, he that was the *Light* met him with a *Light*, he that was the *Word* met him with the Voice of a Word, *Saul, Saul, Why perſecuteſt thou me?*

It was a gracious Favour of the *Lord* to vouchſafe to queſtion with him; but to call him by his Name, and to ingeminate that Name, that was a Sign of his great Affection and Commiſeration : It was a Voice indeed, the Voice of the *Lord*, mighty in Operation : This Voice ſtruck him from his Horſe to the *Earth*, ſtruck him from his Preſumption, *Perſecuteſt thou me?* Yet the Voice was not more *Powerful* than *Merciful* : It was (as *Chryſologus* ſays) *Suaviter fortis*, & *fortiter ſuavis*; the heaviest Fall, and yet the happiest Fall that ever any had ;

it

it was his Fall and his Rising. Thus a Dumbness unto *Zachary*, was not a dumb Instructor, it taught him Faith against another time; so *Blindness* sent unto *Saul*, took away his *Blindness*, making him see more in the Ways of Life, than all his Learning gather'd at the Feet of *Gamaliel* could have revealed unto him.

Saul by this time was gotten up, but tho' he found his Feet, he lost his Eyes, being struck Blind with the extraordinary Brightness of the *Light*, and was therefore led by his Companions into *Damascus*, in which Condition he there remained three Days together Fasting; and at this Time we may probably suppose it was, that he had the Vision and Extasie mention'd by him.

There was at this Time at *Damascus*, *Ananias*, one of the Seventy Disciples, a very devout Man, and probably the first Planter of the *Christian Church* in *Damascus*, and tho' a *Christian*, yet of great Repute amongst the *Jews*: To him *Christ* appear'd, and directed him to the Street and House where *Saul* of *Tarsus* then lodged, who was then at Prayers, and had seen him in a Vision coming to him, to lay his Hands upon him, that he might receive his Sight;
Ana-

Ananias startled at the Name of *Saul*, having heard of his bloody Temper and Practices, knowing upon what Errand he was come to that City, was fore afraid : But *Jesus* quickly made his Fears vanish, by telling him he mistook the Man, that he was now become a chosen Vessel to preach the *Gospel* both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and before the greatest *Potentates* of the Earth, telling him what great Things he should do and suffer for his Sake. Hereupon *Ananias* went forthwith to him, laid his Hands upon him, and told him, *Jesus* had sent him to him, that he might receive his Sight, and be filled with the *Holy Spirit*, which was no sooner said but done, and thick Films like Scales fell from his *Eyes*, and his *Sight* return'd; then he was Baptiz'd, and solemnly initiated into the *Christian Faith*; after which, he soon joyn'd himself to the Disciples of that Place, to the great Joy and Wonder of the *Church*, that the *Wolf* should so soon become a *Lamb*. He that was the Mouth of *Blasphemy*, is become the Mouth of *Christ*: He that was the Instrument of *Satan*, the Organ of the Holy Ghost: As says *St. Chrysostome*, *Being yet upon the Earth, he is an Angel; and being yet but a Man, he is already in Heaven.* What was done

done upon him wrought upon all the World ; he was struck Blind, and all the World saw the better for it.

St. *Chrysostome* calls him an *Universal Priest*, that sacrificed not *Sheep* and *Goats*, but even himself ; and not only that prepar'd the whole World as a Sacrifice to *God*, but so absolutely did he sacrifice himself and his State in this World, as that he chose rather to be *Anathema*, separated from *Christ*, than that they should ; but whether that was not out of an over-vehement and inconsiderate Zeal to his Brethren, is too *high* a Point for me to undertake to judge.

After these Words, *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me ?* he was no longer *Saul*, there was an immediate Change of Affections : Here's another manner of Lycanthropy, than when a Lamb is made a Wolf ; for here is a Wolf made a Lamb, a Bramble is made a Vine, unprofitable Tares become good Wheat, and the last is made first : He that was Born out of Time, hath not only the Perfection, but the Excellency of all his Lineaments. *Saul* was breathing Threatnings and Slaughter against the *Church* ; when he was in the height of his Fury, *Christ* laid hold on him ; this was for the most part *Christ's* Method of Curing :
When

When the *Sea* was in a tempestuous Rage, when the Waters cover'd the Ship, and even shak'd that which could remove Mountains, even the Faith of the Disciples, then *Christ* rebukes the Wind, and commands a *Calm*: When the *Sun* was gone out as a *Gyant* to run his Course, (as *David* speaks) then *God* by the Mouth of another *Josbua*, bids the *Sun* stand still: When the unclean Spirit foam'd and fum'd, tore and rent the possessed Persons, then *Christ* commanded them to go out: *Christ* staid not here till *Saul* being made drunk with Blood was cast into a Slumber, as satisfied with the Blood of *Christians*, in the midst of his Fit *Christ* gave him Physick, in the heat of his Madness he reclaims him.

St. *Paul* gives this Evidence against himself, *I persecuted this way unto Death*; What could he say more against himself? And then says *Christ* to this Tempest, Be quiet; to this glaring *Sun*, Stand still; to this unclean Spirit, Come forth. And in this Sense St. *Paul* calls himself *Abortivum*, a Person born out of Season: For whereas the other *Disciples* and *Apostles* had a sort of a Growth under *Christ*, and were first his *Disciples*, and after his *Apostles*: St. *Paul* was born a Man, an Apo-

Apostle, not carved out as the rest in Time, but an *Apostle* poured out, and cast in a Mould, as *Adam* was a perfect Man in an instant; so was St. *Paul* an Apostle, so soon as *Christ* took him in hand: For St. *Paul* was not in the Number of the *Apostles* at the Descent of the *Holy Ghost*; but then he had more than an equivalent Evidence of his Mission: For when he travell'd from *Jerusalem* to *Damascus*, the Heavens were open'd, and our *Blessed Saviour* himself spake to him, whereupon the Company were astonished, and St. *Paul* struck Blind with the Glory of the Vision, and afterwards being cured by a Miracle at *Damascus*, he had no Assistance from the rest of the *Apostles*, his Instructions came all from *Christ* immediately. And it cannot be deny'd that St. *Paul* in some Kind, and upon some Subjects, is as Eloquent as ever Man was, not inferior to *Demosthenes*, whom some think he had read, or some other excellent *Orators*. His Speech to *Agrippa* hath as much Force and Address, and much more Greatness of Mind and noble Freedom, than any thing we meet with in the best of the Heathen *Orators*: 'Tis true, the Advantage of St. *Paul's* Education was great, he had his *Cause* and his *Master* to assist

assist him, but yet he met with great Difficulties and Hazards in the Execution of his Function: For he was to oppose the Religion of the *Jews*, to alter the Customs which *Moses* had delivered, and to decry the Expectation of a *Temporal Messiah*; he charged them with the highest Crimes imaginable, and told them plainly, That they had betray'd the *Saviour* of the World, and kill'd the *Prince of Life*: And this he told the obstinate *Jews*, who were hardned in Prejudice, and bigotted to Error and Superstition, for which they pleaded Antiquity: St. *Paul* declar'd to the *Sanhedrim*, that *Jesus* whom they had murder'd was rais'd from the Dead, was a *Prince and Saviour*, and that it was from *him* they were to expect Remission of their Sins; with this severe Sharpness St. *Paul* treated *Felix* Viceroy of *Judea*, to whom he talk'd so freely and so pertinently, that the Viceroy forgot his Character, and trembled before him.

And yet the Truth is, the Beginnings of our *Religion* were very unpromising; the first Undertakers began with a slender Force, and there was a strange Disproportion between the Cause and the Effect; for, humanly speaking, if *twelve private Men* should now make an Expedition

dition against the *Grand Signior*, they would in all Probability be as likely to succeed, as the *Apostles* were in their Enterprize when our *Saviour* left them. But herein certainly the Providence of God, for the Prevention of all Doubts and Scruples was great, in that he would not lay the Foundation of *Christian Religion*, as not in the Force of Arms, so neither of Eloquence and artificial Speech, which is often insisted upon by St. Paul, *Not with Wisdom, nor the Excellency of Speech, nor with enticing Words*: And it is worthy our Consideration, how it was possible for a few poor Men, so low in *Interest* and *Education*, to break through the Opposition of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, baffle their Learning, despise their Powers, and make them renounce their *Antient* Belief, and that Life they were most in love with. But tho' they were short in their natural Capacities, their wonderful Success is an undeniable Proof of a *Divine Power* that assisted them; as *Chrysologus* most admirably tells us. *Petrus & Andreas, Jacobus & Joannes, germanitas combinata, ingeminata pauperas, in Apostolorum principes eliguntur, pauperes censu, loco humiles, viles arte, obscuri vitâ, labore communes, addicti, vigiliis, fluctibus mancipati, negati*

gati honoribus, injuriis dati, sed in istis quantum vilis mundanus videbatur aspectus, pretiosus tantum animas Dei intuitus tunc ridebat. Erant censu pauperes, sed innocentia locupletes, loco humiles, sed sanctitate sublimes, viles arte, sed simplicitate pretiosi, obscuri vita, sed vite merito perlucentes, labore communes, sed proposito singulares, addicti vigiliis, sed ad celestes victorias jam vocati, fluctibus mancipati, sed fluctibus non demersi, negati honoribus, dicati magis honoribus, non negati, injuriis dati, sed non injuriis relictis. Petrus Chrysologus, Sermo 28. which shew the particular Gifts that Christ had given to his Apostles.

Now to magnify his *Mercy* and *Glory* more particularly to *St. Paul*, and to take away all Occasion of Despair, *Christ* did upon so many great Disadvantages draw *St. Paul* to him, whom he brought to that remarkable Height on a sudden, that the *Church* celebrates the Conversion of no Man but this: She does not consider the *Martyrs* as Born till they Die; till the World see how they persever'd to the End, she takes no Knowledge of them! Wherefore she calls the Days of their *Death*, their *Birth-Days*: She does not reckon they are Born till they

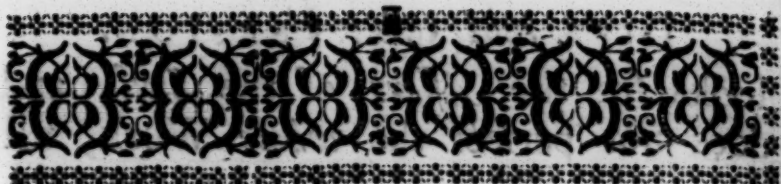
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they *Die* : But of St. *Paul* she makes assur'd the first Day, nay the first Minute, the first Moment, and therefore celebrates his *Conversion* only. And as *Christ* dealt with St. *Paul*, so *God* deals with *us*, he will first cast us down before he will raise us up, he will first break us before he will make us in his Fashion. The *Lord* only knows how to wound us out of Love, more than that how to wound us into Love, not only with him that wounds us, but into Love with the Wound it self, with the very Affliction that he inflicts upon us. The *Lord* knows how to strike us so, that we shall lay hold on the Hand that strikes us, and kiss the Instrument that wounds us : *God* brings to the Gate of *Death*, and by that Gate he leads us to eternal Life : He kills us here that we may live for ever ; he puts us low here that we may be exalted hereafter ; And he hath not discover'd, but made that Northern Passage to pass from that *Frozen Sea* of Calamity and Tribulation, to the heavenly *Jerusalem*. There are some Fruits that ripen not without *Frosts* ; there are some Natures that dispose not themselves to *God* but by *Afflictions* ; And as *Nature* looks for the Season, and does not produce any Thing before ; so *Grace* looks

looks for the *Assent* of the *Soul*, and does not perfect the *whole* Work, till that come. It is *Nature* that brings the Season, but *Grace* the *Assent*, and till the Season for the Fruit, till the Assent of the Soul come, all is not done.

This should be our *Consolation*, that how low soever *God* is pleas'd to cast us, tho' it be to the *Earth*, yet he doth not do it to cast us down, but to bring us home. And *Death* it self is not so much a *banishing* us out of this World, as it is a Visitation of our *Friends* that lie in the *Earth*; neither are any nearer of Kin to us than the *Earth* it self, and the Worms of the *Earth*.





Of NOBILITY.



BSERVING the several Alterations in Nobility, we shall find Four Principal Actors on the Theatres of Great Families : The Beginner, Advancer, Continuer, and Ruiner. The Beginner is he, who either by his Virtues, Merits, or Riches, refineth himself from the Dross of the Vulgar, and layeth the Foundation of his House : An excellent Workman indeed, who not only brings his Tools, but maketh his Materials : But yet Antient Nobility seems no just Ground to be Proud, and have a high Opinion of our selves, because it's borrow'd. Those great Actions, wherein we had no Share, cannot be any part of our Commendation, especially if we have not Abilities to imitate them ;

*Et genus & proavos & quæ non fecimus
ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.*

That

That Man must be very Poor, who hath nothing of his own to appear in, but must patch up his Pedigree with the Relicks of the Dead, and with the Tombstones and Monuments of his Ancestors. Next comes the Advancer of Nobility, who improves the Patrimony of Honour he receiveth, and what his Ancestor found Glass and made Crystal, he finds Crystal and makes it Pearl: Indeed, if a Man could bequeath his Virtues, Merits and Courage, by Will, and settle his good Sense, Learning and Resolution, upon his Children, as certainly as he can his Lands, a brave Ancestor would be a mighty Privilege and great Advantage to his Posterity. Next is the Continuer of Nobility, who keepeth his Nobility alive, and passes it to his Children, neither marring nor mending it, but sends it to his Son as he receiv'd it from his Father: Now this Advantage only by Birth is often the Effect of a sloathful and effeminate Life, when Men will attempt nothing, either in the Field, or in their Closets; when they will neither trouble themselves with Study, nor be contented to expose themselves to the Weather, which Laziness renders them insignificant to the great Purposes of Life; such Men think it a great

Addition to their Birth, to stand at the Bottom of a long Parchment Pedigree, and that their Blood hath run through the Channels of Honour for many Ages: But alas ! This Antiquity consists only in the continual Frugality of the Family, who being once possess'd of an Estate, had the Discretion to keep it, and so hath the Advantage of Living in a better House, and Eating and Drinking better than those who want a Fortune. Indeed, if Antient Nobility did convey to us any Advantage of Body or Mind, and that every Generation grew wiser, stronger, handsomer, or longer-liv'd than other ; if the Breed of a Man's Family were thus improv'd, then indeed the Quality of their Arms would be contrary to their Cloaths, the one would always grow better, the other worse for Wearing. The last is the Ruiner of Families, who basely degenerates from his Ancestors ; so that Nobility in him hath run so far from its first Starting that it's tired, and whilst he lives he is no better than his Grandfather's Tomb, without carv'd over with honourable Titles, within full of Emptiness and Corruption : Such noble Men as these last, look upon it as one of the best Perfections of Nature, to Dress themselves well, and to come handsome.

handsomely into a Room ; but let me tell these Ceremony-Gentlemen, that I think it much better that a Man's Parts should lie in his Head rather than in his Heels. Indeed, in some Persons well-born there is a peculiar Nobleness of Temper in them. A Man may distinguish their Quality by the Air of their Faces, which are good Accomplishments, and recommend them to Company with some Advantage ; but then Men must not be fond of these small Formalities, nor magnify them too much. I know in *England*, that a plain Gentleman of an antient Family is accounted a Person of better Quality than a new made Knight, tho' the Reason of their Knighthood was never so meritorious ; and therefore many such Gentlemen have refus'd to be Knighted, but I think they were much in the wrong : For the Reason why those who are placed in that Degree of Honour, precede others who are afterwards raised in the same Height, is for Encouragement of Industry, to make Men forward to exert their earliest Endeavours to deserve well of the Prince or State. It is but reasonable, that Merit should be consider'd, of what Date soever it is, and a worthy Action ought as well to be consider'd and rewarded, as one

of the same Kind was a thousand Years since: If the Inheritors of Antient Honour have not by personal Additions improv'd that Stock which was granted to their Ancestors, there is no Reason it should be valued above the same Degree (Precedency excepted) which is given now: For to affirm, That a Family rais'd to Nobility by King *Charles* or King *James*, is not as good as one rais'd by the Conqueror, is a Reflection upon those Kings; and it supposes their Judgment and Authority less considerable, and that the Fountain of Honour is dried up. Honour is not like *China* Dishes, which must lie some Ages under Ground before it comes to any Perfection. In taking a true Esteem of Nobility, we are not so much to consider its Antiquity, as the Merit of him to whom it was first granted, and the Distinction which the Prince put upon it.

No Man will affirm an old Shilling to be better than a new Half-Crown, or an old brass Medal dug out of the Ground long since, to be more Valuable than the same Weight in Gold. If a Man were to pay a Debt, the late King *James's* Image upon a Piece of Gold would be more serviceable to him than *Cæsar's* old Coins, which are only valu'd
for

for their Usefulness, because they often rectify Chronology, and explain History, and retrieve us several material Parts of Learning, which had otherwise been lost.

Conquerors made Soldiers ambitious to follow them, by sharing the Fruits of their Conquests with them; and when their Successors had not Estates sufficient to reward all the glorious Actions and eminent Services which Persons did for them, being persuaded that a Man of Courage values nothing so much as Honour, which distinguishes him from other Men, they invented Knighthood, which without exhausting their Treasure, would gain them the Honour of their Subjects, and inflame all others with an extream Desire to make themselves worthy of the same Honour; and it was for this Reason that they created Knights, either just before the Battle, to make them engage more resolutely; or presently after it, to recompence those that had the greatest Hand in the Victory. Thus Nobility is a Quality acquir'd by virtuous Actions and eminent Services, which some Persons have performed to the Prince and State; and tho' Fortune should have more Influence than Merit, upon the dispensing of these Qua-

Qualities, yet the same Judgment is still to be made, because Princes are subject to their Passions, rewarding more bountifully, and raising higher some of their Servants than others: But if a Man be advanced for engaging himself in an unjust Quarrel, he hath no better Pretence to Honour than a resolute Highwayman may challenge; and the Marks of all Favours that either come by servile Flattery, or a dextrous Application to the Vices of their Princes, are rather infamous than honourable to their Posterity, being enobled for those Qualities for which they should have been punish'd: It is a lessening to a Man's Nobility when the Reasons or Grounds of it are unknown, and when the first Principles of Honour happen to be thus course and counterfeit, 'tis not in the Power of Time to mend them, when the Rise of a Family is owing to such an Original; a Man has a particular Reason not to flourish too much upon the Gifts of his Fortune, since there is so much Alloy in it. Nobility rais'd by Arms, when lawfully undertaken, is certainly more great than that which comes by Commerce. The Profession of a Soldier has a particular Title to Honour: It is more Noble than the rest; and

and no wise Man will ever envy or lessen the just Character of Military Glory : The Courage of a Soldier does his Country not much Service after his Death ; the Consequences of his Valour seldom reach beyond his Death ; so there are few the better for it except those he engages for. A Martial Man, unless polish'd by Learning, is usually sour in his Behaviour. The old Heroes were none of the genteelest Men ; *Achilles*, tho' a great Soldier, was very rugged and morose in his Conversation. The Advantages of Learning are certainly very great ; without some share of this, War it self cannot be successful ; nay, without the Assistance of Letters, a Man can never be qualified for any considerable Post in the Camp. For Courage without Conduct is not fit to Command, and many times does more hurt than good. It is Learning that teaches a General the Successes and Events of Actions in former Ages : It instructs him how to take Advantage of his Enemies, and to avoid those Miscarriages which have been fatal to others before him : It teaches him how to fortify and assault, how to manage the Difference of Ground and Weather ;
and

and the Advantages of Learning are more lasting than those of Arms. Learning in a Commander is like a Diamond set in Gold; I do not intend that a Commander should be versed in thorny School-Questions, but in History, which is a silent Study and reserv'd Work: Those that are not versed in it, have Cricks in their Necks, and can't look backward, nor see behind them the Actions which long since were perform'd: History makes a young Man to be old, without gray Hairs, being privileged with the Experience of Age, without the Infirmities or Inconveniences thereof: Nay, it is not only making Things past, present, but inables one to make a rational Conjecture of Things to come: For this World affords no new Accidents, but in the same Sense wherein we call it a New Moon, which is the Old one in another Shape, and yet no other than what hath been formerly. Old Actions return again, furbished over with some new and different Circumstances.

Those that are only Continuers of their Honour or Nobility, deceive the Desires and Hopes of their Friends: Good is not good, when proceeding from

from them, from whom far better is expected. Youthful Virtues are so promising, that they cannot come off at riper Age with Credit, without performing something that may advance the Honour of their Family, and build their Houses one Story higher than they found them.

If our Ancestors have gain'd Honour by the War, we should enquire whether it were in a just Cause, and whether Enterprizes or Advantages were gain'd by Bravery, or whether by Chance or Treachery; for a great many Persons have ventured far, and yet continue in their first Obscurity; and I have known some in my Time, that are now grown great Men, only by having the good Fortune to fall under the Notice of their General, and being sent by him with the good News of a Victory, they have been highly Rewarded and Advanced. Such Men as these are thrown up Hill by another Man's Arms, and made considerable by Chance-Medly, their Merits having been very inconsiderable, or rather nothing at all, when other Men in the same Battle perform'd much more signal Service than that former Person; yet their Courage was never Rewarded,
but

but lost in the Crowd and Tumult of the Action, and got nothing but Blows for their Pains; whereas the other are become Great, not by their Genealogy, but by good Fortune, and having their Tongues well hung, and telling their Story handsomely, which was their greatest Merit. Men that are thus preferr'd, should remember that there were others which ventur'd further, and perform'd more considerable Service, which miscarried as to any private Advantage, because they were not so lucky to give an Account to him that was able to Reward: So that we daily see many Persons, well furnish'd for Employments and Honour, go out of the World, as obscurely as they came into it, only for want of a good Occasion to bring them into Light: Now such Men as before-mention'd, who have receiv'd so valuable Consideration for their small or no Services, ought to acquiesce, and not press too much, being Gentlemen only of the first Head, and should therefore manage their Advancement obligingly, for by treating People roughly, they do but expose themselves, and reproach their own former Condition.

Now

Now he that is truly Noble, hath far different Sentiments, his Greatness is easie, obliging, and agreeable, so that none have just Cause to wish him Less. He is sensible it is the Part of true Nobility to be affable in his Converse, and generous in his Temper: He is equally remov'd from the Extreames of Pride and Baseness, and as Prosperity does not make him Haughty, so neither does Adversity make him Demean himself, he scorns either to trample upon those below him, or to cringe to the greatest Monarch.

Antient Nobility is very glorious, when 'tis found with Virtue, which adds new Splendour to the Honour of his House, and challenges Respect from all; but Lewd Greatness is nothing but the Rigour of Vice, having both Mind and Merits to be uncontrollably Lewd: And a debauched Son of a Noble Family, is one of the intollerable Burdens of the Earth; and the good Education he hath had, is an Auxiliary to his Shame, and the Brightness of his Ancestors makes his Darkeness more notorious. To be Good and Great is an excellent Commendation; but he is more to be valued that is Good, whose Father expired a Clown,

Clown, than the vitious Son of the greatest Lord, tho' his Lineal Descent be never so high; For Virtue in a Man of obscure Parents is like an unpolish'd Diamond which lies among Pebbles, which tho' neglected by the Vulgar, yet the wise Lapidary takes it up as a Jewel.



Of CONTENTMENT.

IF Peace, as most believe, establishes the Throne of Happiness, and safely guards it, 'tis Contentment alone that crowns it; if Safety be the Fort, Contentment is the Magazine. Peace without Contentment is but Lethargy, Safety without it is but a Prison, but Contentment without both is a Kingdom: If without following Peace, a Man becomes his own Enemy; if without endeavouring Safety he be his own Traytor, without enjoying Contentment he is his own Troubler; the discontented Man hath neither Neighbour, nor Friend, nor indeed himself. 'Tis not in the rich Fool's Barns, nor in *Abab's* ravish'd Vineyard, nor in *Achitophel's* knack of Wit, no nor in wiser *Solomon's* dear-bought Experience; no, 'tis a quiet Contentment of Spirit that a Man possesses himself. A Man may pick a Quarrel with himself in the midst of all worldly Happiness,

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pinefs, without this Charm of Self-Contentment : The Truth is, Discontent is the Bone that the Devil throws into every Man's Mouth to gnaw upon, and break his Teeth with. You fhall hardly find any Man, that complains not of fome Want, tho' it be but Want of his own Will ; Things go not right, if they run not upon the vertiginous Wheels of his own Fancy ; the poor Man thinks the World unequally dealt, and the rich Man thinks fo too, becaufe the Care, together with the Keys, hang fo heavily about him ; the Scholar thinks the Soldier hath all the Money ; and he again, that the other hath all the Eafe ; the fingle Man wants a Wife, and the marry'd Man wants no lefs in that he wants not a Wife ; and Men strive to vex themfelves by their own Difcontents, and flatter themfelves in not doing what they fhould do, by prefuming what they would do, were but their Condition other than it is, not confidering that every Eftate hath its Weights as well as Wings, and that the true Pleafure of Life is to be free from Perturbation, to enjoy the prefent (without any anxious Dependance upon the future) not to amufe our felves either with Hopes or Fears, but to reft fatisfied with what we have, for
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he that is so wants nothing ; the great Blessings of Mankind are within us, and within our reach, but we shut our Eyes, and like People in the dark, we fall foul upon every Thing we search for, without finding it, an Equality of Mind makes every Man his own Supporter ; whereas he that is born up by any thing else may fall ; it is a contented Mind that makes a Man happy ; there must be a Constancy in all Conditions, with such an Indifferency for the Bounties of Fortune, that either with them, or without them, we may live contentedly.

It is the Part of a great Mind to be temperate in Prosperity, and resolute in Adversity. There are some that will close and grapple with ill Fortune, and will come off victorious ; but there are others again so delicate, that they cannot so much as bear a scandalous Report ; which is the same Thing, as if one should quarrel for being jostled in a Crowd, or dashed as he walks in the Streets : A brave Man must expect to be tossed, for he is to steer his Course in the Teeth of Fortune, and to work against Wind and Weather.

The greatest Cause of Impatience grows not so much from the Force of Calamity, as from the Reluctance of the

Mind of him that suffers it; this raises the Billows within, for tho' the Calamity may be rough and beyond our Power to extricate; yet when it meets with a Mind as tumultuous as the Calamity, it raises a Storm, as when the Wind and Tyde are contrary, which may endanger the Vessel.

He that violently contends against Misfortunes, is like one bound with strong Bonds, his struggling gauls him more than his Bonds would otherwise do, and a proud Spirit contributes more to his own Uneasiness, than his Cross does: But Calmness of Mind breaks the Force of the Calamity, and the contented Man looks upon his worst Condition to be less than he deserves, for so long as we live in this World, there is no Condition so troublesome but it may be worse: If we be Poor and under a Cloud of Ignominy and Reproach, yet if we have our Health of Body and Composedness of Mind, that's more than we deserve; nay, if we be under a Complication of Misfortunes, so long as our Lives are spared, there's Hope, and we must be patient under all Conditions, submitting our selves intirely to the Will of God; and that not only as an Act of Necessity and Duty, but as an Act of Choice and Pru-

Prudence, since all the Successes of our Life are under the Government of Providence, and we may be assured, that God will either in due time remove them, or support us under them.

Temporal Afflictions are Spiritual Physick, being administred by the no less tender than skillful Hand of Providence; but we, like foolish Patients, embitter our Condition, by chewing the Pills which we should swallow; we mingle our Passions with our Crosses, and thro' Impatience struggle with our Yoak, thereby making our Burthen more heavy, and our Afflictions the more grievous; God's Love is fatherly for Ease, as well as motherly for Tenderneſs; as a Father he will sometimes humble his Children by Afflictions, sustaining them with his Hand, not as a Mother, still indulging them in Delights: He does always send his Staff with his Rod, his Grace with his Affliction, to instruct, support and comfort us. Wherefore it's well said, That all the Troubles and Distresses that befall us, tho' bitter Arrows, yet they come from the sweet Hand of God, whose special Providence over us is such, that he afflicts us in Mercy: God's Patronage and Protection is not like that of Men, who as *Sal-*

vian says, They offend the Miserable by defending them ; like the thorny Bush, to which in the Storm when the poor Sheep run for Shelter, they lose their Fleeces : But God is a Sun and a Shield to those in Affliction ; A Sun to enlighten them in the midst of Darknes, and a Shield to defend them in the midst of Dangers ; and by his Spiritual Providence he then saves, when we seem to be past Succour ; and therefore we have reason, not only patiently to submit, but cheerfully and contentedly to bear any Condition which he dispenses, and with an implicit Faith to resign our Wills to his, being assured it is infinitely more Wise and Just than ours.

Seneca says, *Optimi milites ad durissima mittuntur* ; the stoutest Soldiers are put upon the hottest Service ; and so the best Men upon the sharpest Sufferings. It is a Mark of a General's Esteem, when he puts an Officer upon a Post of Danger, who does not say his General uses him ill, but does him Honour ; and so should we say that are commanded to encounter Difficulties : A Master gives his hopeful Scholars the hardest Lessons ; so God deals with the most generous Spirits ; and we are
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not to look upon the cross Encounters of Fortune, as a Cruelty, but as a Contest. God tries and hardens us, the Familiarity of Misfortunes brings us the Contempt of them, and that Part is strongest which is most exercised; the Seaman's Hand is callous, the Soldier's Arm is strong, the Tree that is exposed to the Wind takes the best Root. Those People that live in a perpetual Winter, in Extremity of Frost and Want, where a Cave, a Lock of Straw, or a few Leaves, is all their Covering, and wild Beasts their Nourishment; all this by Custom is not only made tollerable, but when once it is taken up by Necessity, by little and little it becomes pleasant to them. Why should we then account that Condition of Life a Calamity, which is the Lot of many Nations? Our Life is a Warfare; and what brave Man would not rather chuse to be in a Tent than in a Shambles? Fortune seems to encounter a fearful Man, there's no Honour in the Victory, where there's no Danger in the Way to it.

She tries *Mutius* by Fire, *Rutilius* by Banishment, *Socrates* by Prison, *Cato* by Death; 'Tis only in adverse Fortune and bad Times, that we find great Examples: *Mutius* thought himself hap-

pier with his Hand in the Flame, than if it had been in the Bosom of his Mistress: He was a Man only of a Military Courage, without the Help either of Philosophy or Letters; who when he found he had kill'd the Secretary instead of *Porfenna* the Prince, burnt his Right Hand to Ashes for the Mistake, and held his Arm in the Flame till it was taken away by his very Enemies. And *Porfenna* did more easily pardon *Mutius* for his intent to kill him, than *Mutius* forgave himself for missing of his Aim: He might have done a Luckier Thing but never a Braver. *Metellus* suffer'd Exile resolutely, *Rutilius* cheerfully; *Socrates* disputed in the Danger; and tho' he might have escaped, refused it, to shew the World how easie a Thing it was to subdue the two great Terrours of Mankind, Death and Pain. The Action of *Rutilius* was commended by his very Enemies, who upon a glorious and publick Principle chose rather to lose his Country, than to return from Banishment; the only Man who deny'd any thing to *Sylla* the Dictator, who recalled him; but he not only refus'd to come, but retired farther off: *Let them, says he, who think Banishment a Misfortune, live Slaves at Rome, under the imperious*
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Cruelties of Sylla; He that sets a Price upon the Heads of Senators, and after a Law of his own Institution against Cut-Throats, becomes the greatest himself. Is it not better for a Man to live abroad in Exile, than to be massacred at home? 'Tis not the Torment, but the Cause we are to consider; and in suffering for a good Cause, the more Pain the more Renown; and we must look upon our Banishment and Hardships as Acts of Providence, which suffers Particulars many Times to be wounded, for Conservation of the whole: Besides, God chastizes some People under Appearance of Blessing them, turning their Prosperity to their Ruin.

What was *Regulus* the worse because Fortune made choice of him for an eminent Instance of Patience; he was thrown into a Case of Wood, stuck round on the inside with pointed Nails, so that which way soever he turned his Body it rested upon his Wounds; his Eye-lids were cut off to keep him waking, and yet *Mecenas* was not happier upon his Bed than *Regulus* upon his Torments. *It hath pleased the Gods, saith he, to single me out for an Experiment of the Force of humane Nature.* Indeed no Man knows his own Strength or Value but
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by being put to the Proof; the Pilot is try'd in a Storm, the Soldier in a Battel: No Man can be happy that does not stand firm against all Contingencies and Misfortunes, for the more we struggle with our Necessities we draw the Knot the harder, the more the Bird flutters in the Snare, the surer he is caught; so that the best way is to submit and lie still, under this double Consideration, that the Proceedings of God are unquestionable, and his Decrees not to be revoked. That Man is only happy that is unmov'd with any external Misfortune, or at least so little mov'd, that the keenest Arrow in the Quiver of Fortune is but as the prick of a Needle to him rather than a Wound, and all her Weapons fall upon him as Hail upon the Roof of a House, that crackles and skip off again without any Damage to the Inhabitant.

Some Philosophers have search'd so far for Arguments of Comfort against Pain, as to doubt whether there was any such Thing as Sense of Pain; and yet when any great Evil hath befallen them, they could sigh, and groan, and cry out as loud as other Men. Others have held that Afflictions are no real Evils but only in Opinion, and therefore

fore a wise Man ought not to be troubled at them : But he must be a very wise Man that can forbear being troubled at things that are troublesome. Others would delude this Trouble by a graver way of Reasoning, *viz.* That these things are fatal, and therefore we ought not to be troubled at them, it being in vain to be troubled at what we cannot help. But *Augustus* made a sharp Reply to one that ministred this Comfort to him, *Hoc ipsum est*, says he, *quod me male habet*. This was so far from giving any Ease to his Mind, that it was the very thing that troubled him. But the best Moral Argument of Patience is, the Advantage of Patience it self: That is, to bear Evils as quietly as we can is the Way to make them lighter and easier ; but to toss and fling, and to be restless, is good for nothing but to fret and inrage our Pain ; 'tis like Men in a Fever, who infinitely increase their Heat by their tumbling and tossing more than if they lay still ; and thus we gall our Sores, and make the Burthen that is upon us sit more uneasy, and like the Ship that is not broken by the Rock, but by its own violent Motion against it ; and therefore we must so manage our selves under Affli-

Afflictions, as not to make them more grievous than indeed they are.

If we give way to our Passions, we do but gratify our selves for the present, in order to our future Disquiet; but if we resist and conquer them, we lay the Foundation of perpetual Peace and Tranquility in our Minds. The more we gratify our Lusts, the more craving they will be; *Crescit indulgens sibi diras hydrops*, every Lust has a kind of hydropick Distemper, the more we drink the more we shall thirst, so that by retrenching our inordinate Desires we do not rob our selves of any Pleasures, but only the Trouble of farther Dissatisfaction.

He that enjoys the greatest Happiness in this World, does still want one Happiness more to secure him for the future what he possesses at present; and if the Enjoyments of this Life were certain, yet they are unsatisfying; it is a hard thing that every thing in this World can trouble us, but nothing can give us Satisfaction. I know not how it is, but either we or the things of this World, or both, are so fantastical, that we can neither be well with these things nor without them: If we be hungry we are in Pain, and if we be full we are uneasy;

casie ; if we are poor we think our selves miserable, and if we be rich we commonly really are so ; if we are in a low Condition we fret and murmur, if we chance to get up, and are raised to Greatness, we are many times farther from Content than before ; so that we pursue the Happiness of this World just as little Children chase Birds, when we think we are very near it, and have it almost in our Hands, it flies farther from us than it was at first : Indeed the Enjoyments of this World are so far from affording us Satisfaction, as the sweetest of them are most apt to satiate and cloy us : All the Pleasures of this World are so contriv'd as to yield us very little Happiness ; if they go off soon they signify nothing, and if they stay long we are sick of them : After a full Draught of any sensual Pleasure, we presently loath it, and hate it as much after the Enjoyment as we search'd it, and longed for it in Expectation : But the Delights of the other World, as they still give us full Satisfaction, so we shall never be weary of them, every Repetition of them will be accompanied with a new Pleasure and Contentment : In the Felicities of Heaven two things will be reconciled, which never met together in any

any sensual Delight, long and full Enjoyment, and yet a fresh and perpetual Pleasure ; it would embitter the Pleasures of Heaven to see an End of them, tho' at never so great a Distance : But God hath so ordered things, that the vain Delights of this World should be temporary, but the substantial Pleasures of the next World be as lasting as they are excellent.

That Man is truly happy who is tempted to no anxious Fore-casts for future Events, knowing nothing can happen in Contradiction of that Supreme Will in which he hath Sanctuary, which will certainly chuse for him with that Tenderness that an indulgent Father would for his Child, that casts its self into his Arms : When our Will is thus inrolled with God's, all Calamities are unstringed, and even those things which seem most repugnant to our sensitive Natures, are yet very agreeable to our Spirits. There is no Face of Adversity so formidable which set in this Light will not look amiable ; let us but make sure of Resignation, and Content will flow into us without our farther Industry. *Socrates* said rightly of Contentment, opposing it to the Riches of Fortune, that 'tis the Wealth of Nature, for it gives every
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thing that we have learnt to want and really need ; and Resignation in our present State bestows all things that a Christian not only needs but can desire : 'Tis the Usurpation of our Will over our Reason which breeds all the Confusions and Tumults within our own Hearts, and there is no Possibility of curbing its Insolence but by putting them into safe Custody, by committing it to him who alone can order our unruly Wills, and nothing but Experience can inform us of the Serenity and Calm of that Soul who has resigned his Will to God.

It is certain in the Course of the World, there must be a greater number of Crosses and Troubles than of external Comforts, nay there is scarce any Comfort but, like *Jonah's* Gourd, it hath a Worm at the Root of it, which not only withers the Comfort it self, but creates greater Trouble and Sorrow than the Comfort it self hath if intirely enjoy'd ; so that in all worldly things the Stock of Troubles is three times greater than that of Comforts ; so true is that of *Job*, *A Man is born to Troubles as the Sparks fly upward* ; why therefore should a Man sink into Discontent, because the World doth but follow its own natural State ?

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"Tis certain a prudent Man is like the Elixir, it turns Iron into Gold, makes the most sour Condition of Life not only tolerable, but useful and convenient ; for a wise Man will mould and frame his worst Condition into a Condition of Comfort by his Patience, and he that can content himself with the good Temper of his own Heart, has no Reason to be discontented with his Condition, since if it be not good he can make it such, the Mind being the chief Matter either in Content or Discontent : We need no other Proof than that of *Ahab* and *Haman*, the one a great King, the other a great Favourite to a mighty Monarch full of Wealth and Honour, yet a covetous Mind in the one, and a proud Mind in the other, made the former seek for a little Spot of Ground, and the latter grew so highly discontented for want of the Knee of a poor *Jew*, that it withered all his Enjoyments. Patience and Resignation give us Possession of our selves, we then remain Masters of our Passions, and tho' there be Storms, and Tempests, and rolling Seas without us, yet all is calm within ; and tho' I want something that others have, yet I have somewhat that many better than I want : If I want Wealth, yet I have Health ; if

I want Health, yet I have Children, which others want. Thus we should learn Contentment, by considering others Wants and our Enjoyments, and not learn Discomforts from others Enjoyments; tho' these are only moral Considerations, yet they are of much Use and Moment, and carry'd the Heathens a great way in the Virtue of Patience. But we are furnish'd with a more excellent way, because no Affliction befalls us but is reached out to us from the Hand of Divine Providence, from whom we have our Being: The general State of Mankind in this World is a State of Trouble and Affliction, and is so incident to all Degrees and Conditions of Mankind, that no Person of whatsoever Age or Sex but hath a Part in this common State of Mankind. And we find Men in all Ages, that only by the Direction of natural Light, have calmed their Disquiets, and reasoned themselves into Contentment, under the greatest and most terrible Pressures; Men, who, amidst the acutest Torments, have still preserv'd a Serenity of Mind, and have frustrated Contempts and Reproaches by disregarding them; and surely we shall give a very ill Account of Christianity, if we cannot do as much with it as they did without it.

The greatest Cause of Discontent is, that Men have no definite Measure of their Desires; 'tis not the Supply of all their real Wants will serve their Turn, their Appetites are precarious, and depend upon Contingencies; they hunger not because they are empty, but because others are full. Many would like their own Portion well enough, if they had not seen another whose Portion they lik'd better. *Ahab* might well have satisfy'd himself with the Kingdom of *Israel*, had not *Naboth's* Vineyard lay in his way: *Haman* could find no Gust in all the Sensualities of the *Persian* Court, because a poor despicable *Jew* denies his Obeisance; and thus every one of our Passions keeps us upon the Rack, till they have obtain'd their Designs. If we will create imaginary Wants to our selves, why do we not create an imaginary Satisfaction to them. 'Twere the merrier Frenzy of the two, to be like the mad *Athenian*, who thought all the Ships that came into the Harbour his own, than to be still tormenting our selves with unfatiable Desires: For we generally find those that are farthest remov'd from Want, are so from Content too; they take no notice of the real substantial Blessings they enjoy, and go in quest after some fugitive Satisfaction, which,

which, like a Shadow, flies still faster in proportion to their Pursuit. A strange Folly, thus to court Vexations, and be miserable in Chimera. We chew the Cud upon Gall and Wormwood, and embitter our own Lives meerly by these imaginary Sufferings; nor do we only fright our selves with Images of past Calamities, but we lay romantick Scenes for Distresses, and raise Alarms to our selves: We do nicely and critically observe every little adverse Accident of our Lives, and let a whole Current of Prosperity glide by, without our Notice; like little Children, our Fingers are never off the sore Place, till we have pick'd every light Scratch into an Ulcer: Whereas, if we cast up our Accounts justly, we shall find our Receipts have infinitely exceeded our Disbursements, and that for the few Mites of Obedience we have pay'd to our Creator, we have receiv'd Talents of Mercies from him; but instead of entertaining our selves with the pleasanter Parts of God's Dispensations to us, we always pore upon the harsher, and look upon our Misfortunes through all the magnifying Opticks our Fancies can supply; and we are so full of our selves, that we can see nothing beyond it. Every Man expects God should place him where he hath a Mind to be,

and tho' we are apt to tax it as a great Injustice in a Prince, when he indulges any thing to a private Favourite to the publick Disadvantage, yet so unequal are we, that we murmur at God for not doing that which we murmur at Men for doing. We must consider that other Men have the same Appetites with us, and if we dislike an inferior State, why should not we believe others do so too; and we must not think God should be more concern'd to humour us than those Multitudes of others who have the same Desires? Every Man would be above and superior, and if no Man were below, no Man could be above: So in Wealth, most Men desire more, but every Man does at least desire to keep what he has, how then shall one Part of the World be supply'd, without the Diminution of the other, unless there should be as miraculous a Multiplication of Treasure for Men's Avarice, as there was of Loaves for their Hunger? It was a good Answer which an Ambassador of an oppressed Province gave to *Anthony*, *If, O Emperor, thou wilt have double Taxes from us, thou must help us to double Springs and Harvests.* And sure God must be at the Trouble of a new Creation, make a double World, if he should oblige himself to satisfy all the unreasonable Appetites

Appetites of Men; the Truth is, we have generally in us the worser Part of the Levellers Principles, and tho' we can very contentedly behold Multitudes below us, yet we are impatient to see any above us; and thus we create Torments to our selves by our own Repinings, which only sets us farther from our Aims.

It is observable of the first two Kings of *Israel*, who were of God's immediate Election, that he surpriz'd them with that Dignity when they were about a mean Imployment, the one seeking his Father's Asses, the other keeping his Father's Sheep; and surely he that sits down with this Acquiescence, is a happier Man than he that enjoys the greatest worldly Splendor, but infinitely more so than he who impatiently covets what he cannot attain, for such a Man puts himself upon a perpetual Rack, keeps his Appetites up to the utmost Stretch, and yet has nothing wherewith to satisfy them; for either we are troubled for the Want of something we desire, or at the suffering something we would avoid. And there is no Man who soberly recollects the Events of his Life, but must confess that he hath sometimes desir'd Things that would have been to his Mischief, if he had had them; and on the other side, when he has obtain'd what he

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desir'd,

fired, it hath been to him a Punishment, rather than a Satisfaction ; whereas by our Acquiescence under the Ills we suffer, the Bitterness is taken off from all our Afflictions, there being nothing which so much purifieth us, if we do not frustrate their Efficacy by our irregular Management under them.

Afflictions wean us from the World ; we read in the Story of the Deluge, so long as the Earth was covered with Waters, the very Raven was contented to take shelter in the Ark ; but when all was fair and dry, even the Dove finally forsook it ; and it is much so with us, the worst of Men will commonly in Distress have Recourse to God, when the best of us are apt to forget him in the Blandishments of Prosperity : We should not therefore give our Hearts to any external Thing, but let all the Concerns of the World hang loose about us, whereby we shall quit them insensibly, whenever they are call'd for. We must not look to be carried into Heaven upon Beds of Ivory, nor from the Noise of Harps and Viols to be immediately wrap'd up into the Choir of Angels : We may certainly often find that those Events which we have entertain'd with Regret, have, in the Consequences, been very beneficial to us, of which I am still a living Testi-

Testimony; for all the good Fortune and Promotion, which by their late Majesties Grace and Favour I attain'd to, was occasioned only by the Dexterity I then shew'd in giving such good Account of Affairs abroad, whilst I was then in Prison at *Bruges*. Nay, sometimes the Inhumanity of a Man's Relations are the Occasion of his Advantage; thus the barbarous Malice of *Joseph's* Brethren was the first Step to his Dominion over *Egypt*; and it is a common Observation in Families, that the most discouraged Children usually prove better than the Darlings; and there is nothing more ordinary than for that which one esteems a great Calamity to become the Foundation of our future Happiness.

A low Condition is a terrible Thing in Sound and Opinion, and that's all: Some Men are banish'd and stripp'd of their Estates, others are poor in Plenty, which is the basest sort of Beggary, for to spare of what a Man hath, not only what he may need, but what he doth need, is not only to walk with a Man's Horse in his Hand, but to carry the Saddle too; and of the two it is a great deal better to die a Beggar than to live a Beggar. We usually condemn Villains to the Mines, and he that labours first to get Money, and then

locks up his Money from himself, condemns both himself and it but again to the Mines, as if he envied both their very Being above Ground. Poverty is not a Thing to be wish'd no more than War, but if it be our Lot, we must bear our Misfortunes as becomes wise and honest Men; we do not pray for War, but for Generosity and Courage in all the Extremities of War, if it happens. Afflictions are but the Exercises of Virtue, and an honest Man is out of his Element when he is idle: It is a common Argument against the Justice of Providence, in the Matter of Reward and Punishment, the Misfortunes of good Men in this World, and the Prosperity of the Wicked; but alas, Misfortunes come by Divine Appointment, and to those that are good Men even for that very Reason, because they are good: Prosperity shews a Man but one Part of human Nature, no Body knows what such a Man's good for, neither in Truth doth he understand himself for want of Experiment. Temporal Happiness is for weak and vulgar Minds, but Calamity is the Touchstone of a brave Mind, that resolves to live and die free and Master of it self; and Adversity is best for us, for it is God's Mercy to shew the World their Errors, and that the Things they fear and covet are neither good

good nor evil, being the common and promiscuous Lot both of good Men and bad; if they were good only the good should enjoy them, and if bad only the wicked should suffer them: A wise Man carries all his Treasure within himself; and what Fortune gives she may take, but he leaves nothing at her Mercy: He stands firm and keeps his Ground against all Misfortunes, without so much as changing Countenance, he is Proof against all Accidents: He is a Friend to Providence, and will not murmur at any thing that comes to pass by God's Appointment, and never any Man was broken by Adversity that was not first betrayed by Prosperity. The Truth is, we are generally mistaken in the Nature of Good and Evil, and have not the true Measures of it; that is truly good which makes a Man the better, and that truly evil which makes a Man the worse; if Prosperity makes me thankful, munificent and humble, then 'tis good for me, and makes me better, but if it makes me proud 'tis evil for me: If Adversity makes me clamorous and murmur 'tis ill for me, but if it makes me humble, sober and patient then 'tis good; and let every Man impartially take the Measure of the very same Man in each Condition, he shall find ten to one receive more Mischief by Prosperity.

richer than Adversity. There is a strange Witchcraft in Prosperity, which gets ground upon our Mind and Virtue, especially upon our Humility, for worldly Grandeur secretly steals away that Virtue, and impairs it sooner than any other; Pride is the Devil, that usually haunts and waits upon worldly Greatness: How many Men have we seen, that under the greatest Pressures and Calamities of Poverty and Reproach have yet kept up their Reputation, but in the warm Beams and Sun-shine of Prosperity have cast off their Goodness, as the Traveller did his Cloak in the Fable, and became as great Oppressors and debauch'd Livers, as if they had never heard of Heaven or Hell. True Humility is a great Guard upon the Soul of a Man against these Rocks and Hazards; an humble Man looks upon all his Prosperity and Plenty not as his own, but as it is the Disposition of the great Master of the Family of Heaven and Earth, Talents entrusted to him as a Steward to employ for his Master's Service and Honour, and not for his own Grandeur and Pleasure: Our Vices are the Vermin that are commonly bred in us by the warm Influences of Prosperity.

We do not compare the Good of others with our Good, nor their Evil with our
Evil,

Evil, but with an envious Curiosity we amass together all the desirable Circumstances of our Neighbour's Condition, and with a prying Discontent we ransack all our Grievances, and confront to them; this is but a thin Piece of Sophistry; and we change the Scene, we compare our Neighbours and our selves in Point of Morality, where we make his Vices as much exceed ours, as our Calamities did his in the other Instance. However this is the pleasanter kind of Deceit, for a Man hath some Joy in thinking himself less wicked than his Neighbour, but no Comfort in thinking himself more miserable. Indeed if we could use our Eyes aright, and see Things in their true Shapes, a Competency would be more pleasing than Abundance, and the envy'd Pomp of Princes, when balanc'd with the Cares and Hazards annex'd, would rather make a wise Man fear than desire Preferment; and if a Man well understood the Right, he would rather chuse to wield a Flail than a Scepter; and indeed there is no greater Unhappiness than the fond Admiration of other Mens Enjoyments, and Contempt of our own: But if we would begin at the right End, and look with as much Compassion on the Adversities of others, as we do with Envy at their Prosperities, every

every Man would find Cause to sit down contentedly with his own Burthen.

David, the Man after God's own Heart, was no less signal for his Afflictions than for his Piety ; he was some Time an Exile from his Country, and after being settled in his Throne, what a Succession of Calamities had he in his own Family ; the incestuous Rape of his Daughter, the Retaliation of that by the Murder of *Amnon*, and that seconded by the rebellious and barbarous Conspiracy of *Absalom* ; his Expulsion from *Jerusalem* ; the base Revilings of *Shimei* ; and lastly, the Loss of his darling Son in the Act of his Sin. It is an ill-natur'd thing for any Man to think himself more miserable, because another is happy, and yet it is this thing alone, by which many Men have made themselves wretched, having created Wants to themselves, from the envious Contemplation of other Mens Abundance. Whenever God administers to us a bitter Cup, we may be sure the Ingredients are medicinal, and such as our Infirmities require ; he durst not trust our intemperate Appetites with unmix'd Prosperities, the Lasciviousness whereof, tho' it may please our Palates, yet it may engender most fatal Diseases. But alas, we do not understand our own Interest, because we do not rightly understand
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stand what we are our selves. We consider our selves meerly in our animal Being, our Bodies, and when we are invaded there, we think we are undone, tho' that Breach be made only to retrieve that diviner Part within us, oppress'd with the Flesh about it, for our Body is to our Soul but as a Garment to the Body, a decent Case and Cover; and certainly he must be a mad Man that would not rather have his Cloaths cut than his Flesh, and we ought not to repine that our Souls are cured at the Cost of our Bodies; and our impatient Resistances do only frustrate the medicinal Part of our Afflictions, and our Murmurings may ruin our Souls, but will never avert any of our outward Calamities.

To make a right Estimate of this World, we should consider it as a Stage, and our selves but as Actors, and to resolve that it is very little material what Part we play, so we do it well; a Comedian may get as much Applause by acting the Slave as the Conqueror, and he that acts the one to Day, may to Morrow reverse the Part and personate the other; and certainly he that hath well imprest upon his Mind the Vanity and Vexation of the World, cannot be much surpris'd at any thing that befalls him in it. We take the magnifying Glasses of Discontent when we view our

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own Miseries and others Felicities, but look upon our Enjoyments and their Sufferings thro' the contracting Opticks of Ingratitude and Incompassion. It is a very ill-natured thing for any Man to think himself more miserable because another is happy, and yet this is the very thing by which alone many Men have made themselves wretched, creating Wants to themselves meerly from the envious Contemplation of other Mens Abundance. *Lucifer* was happy enough in his original State, yet could not think himself so because he was not like the most High, and by insolent Ambition forfeited his Bliss; and those do perfectly transcribe his Copy, who cannot be satisfied with any inferior Degree of Prosperity but what their Impatiencies with other Mens Enjoyments of what they cannot attain. God never articted with the Ambitious to give him Honours, with the Covetous to fill his Bags, with the Voluptuous to feed his Luxury; if therefore we expect to be satisfied let us modestly confine our Desires within the Limits God hath set us, and then every Accession which he superadds will appear a Bounty.

The best Expedient for Contentment is to confine our Thoughts to the present. We often heap fantastick Loads upon our
selves

selves by anxious Presages of things which perhaps will never happen, which is one of the greatest Follies imaginable; for either the Evil will come, or it will not; if it will, 'tis sure no such desirable Guest that we should go on to meet it, we shall feel it time enough when it comes, we need not anticipate our Sense of it; but if it will not come, what extream Madnes is it for a Man to torment himself with that which will never be, to create to himself Engines of Tortures, and by such chimerical Afflictions make himself as miserable as the most real ones could do? Therefore let us rest our selves upon that admirable Aphorism of our Saviour's, *sufficient unto the Day is the Evil thereof*. A querilous repining Humour is one of the most pernicious Habits incident to Mankind, but yet as deformed People are most often in Love with themselves, so this crooked Piece of our Temper is of all others the most indulgent to it self; it will nourish it self with Chimeras, suborn a thousand imaginary Distresses, and is impatient of any Diversion, loves to converse only with it self: Men cherish this Disease of their Mind, and improve their Torment, roll and chew the bitter Pill in their Mouths, and by devoting all Thoughts to the Subject of
their

their Grief, keep up an uninterrupted Sense of it, as if they had the same Tyranny for themselves which *Caligula* had for others, and lov'd to feel themselves die. This Word Calamity hath an ill Reputation in the World, the very Name is more grievous than the thing it self; what need any Man complain if he can turn that into a Happiness which others count a Misery? A wise Man is never surpris'd, in the Midst of Plenty he prepares for Poverty, as a prudent Prince does for War in the Depth of Peace; our Condition is good enough if we make the best on't, and our Felicity is in our own Power. Every Man should stand upon his Guard against Fortune, and take heed to himself when she speaks him fairest. A brave Man looks upon himself as a Citizen, a Soldier of the World, in despite of Accidents and Oppositions he maintains his Station, and is more ambitious of being reputed Good than Happy. *Mutius* lost his Right Hand with more Honour than he could have preserv'd it; he was a greater Conqueror without it than he could have been with it, for with the very Stump of it he overcame two Kings, *Tarquin* and *Porfenna*. *Rutillia* follow'd *Cotta* into Banishment, she staid and she return'd with him too, and soon after she lost him without

without so much as shedding a Tear ; a great Instance of her Courage in his Banishment, and of her Prudence in his Death.

Many Men have longer Intermissions from Afflictions than others, yet none are totally exempt from them ; and that Man who hath lived to the ordinary Extent of the Age of Man, will find his Crosses and Sufferings have out-weighed the Treasure of his Comforts in this Life : The poor Man reckons it his Affliction that he wants Wealth, and the rich Man is not without his Affliction, either in the Loss of it, or for fear of losing it.

Men in Prosperity cannot suppose a Change in their Estates ; a healthful Man can hardly think of dying ; the Reason is, that our present Condition falls under our present Sense, and takes up our whole Consideration, and things that are not yet are only present by Contemplation, which does not so strongly affect the Mind, because it hath not the like Strength of Impression upon the Mind as that which is present and sensible ; whereas an Apprehension of a disadvantageous Change of our Condition, admirably fills a Man with such a Temper of Spirit as be-

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comes his changed Condition : But a Man in Prosperity, that never puts himself under the sad Thoughts of a Change of his present Happiness, if such a Change befalls him he is at his Wits end, he is surprized and overwhelmed with it, being taken before he is prepar'd : It is certain it is a very great Improvidence for a Man to be learning those Virtues, when the present Necessity calls for the Use of them ; it's like a Thief who is to learn to read when he is to pray his Clergy.

Affliction doth not so much endanger a good Man to lose his Innocence as Wealth and Honour do ; let any Man observe either in himself or others, we are all equally the worse for Prosperity, and it is a far greater Difficulty to manage a prosperous Fortune, than a low and afflicted Condition ; and therefore those are securest from Affliction that use their Prosperity with Equality of Mind ; because they keep a Check upon their Corruptions, and so stand in less need of this Physick ; for my Part, I have quite forgot that ever I was prosperous, and my ill Fortune doth now the less trouble me ; and I can well and truly say with *Seneca* ;

Sto

*Stet quicunque volet potens
Aula culmine lubrico :
Me dulcis saturet quies,
Obscuro positus loco,
Leni perfruar otio.
Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui notus nimis omnibus,
Ignatus moritur sibi.*

Let him that will ascend the tott'ring Seat
Of courtly Grandeur, and become as great
As are his mounting Wishes ; as for me
Let sweet Repose and Rest my Portion be:
Give me some mean obscure Recess, a
Sphear
Out of the Road of Business, or of Fear
Of falling lower, where nothing may annoy
Or hinder my Retirement to enjoy:
Death is a meer Surprise, a very Snare
To him that makes his Life its greatest
Care,
To be a publick Pageant known to all,
But unacquainted with himself, doth fall.

When Job was scraping his Sores upon the Dunghill, he said, Lord, when I was in Prosperity I heard thee, but now in my Affliction I see thee ; which shews nothing gives a more intimate Knowledge of God than to be surrounded with Tribulation ; the Soul in
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Prosperity grows proud, deaf and careless, so that she must smart in the Senses to be made sensible. We are not to be wrought upon but when afflicted and in Misery: *Jonas* in the Whale's Belly, the Prodigal in the Pig-sty, the Sick in his Fever, the Lascivious in his Sweating-tub; then they recollect themselves; but when in Sports and Pastimes, sailing in a Sea of Plenty and Delights, all our Senses are shut up, and no Passage open: Solid Virtue, like a Rose amidst Thorns, seldom springs forth but in the Soil of Crosses, Afflictions and Austerities. Those Men are truly virtuous who take, as it were, with the same Relish the Gall of Misfortunes and the Honey of Prosperity: No stormy Seasons hinder their Journey, and that which distracts the soft and effeminate, is to them Matter of Repose and Joy; all Things that pass under the Name of Adversity, are not so but to the Wicked, who make ill Use of them in prising the Creature more than the Creator. The Delay our blessed Saviour made in sending Succour to his Disciples, endanger'd by a Storm at Sea, sufficiently hints unto us the Pleasure God takes to see the Just row against the Stream, tug and wrestle with all the Force

Force they can against the Storms and Afflictions of this World: And therefore it is well observed, that God laid open *Job* to all the Assaults of Satan, but with this Reserve, that he touch'd not his Life, and this not in Regard that Death would have eclipsed the Glory of that great Champion, but because he would not be depriv'd of such a Combatant, to whose Conflict God with his blessed Angels were intent with much Satisfaction, and so would not lose the Pleasure of seeing that stout Skirmish fought to the last, betwixt him and his Enemy; and something to this Purpose *St. Gregory Nyssen* declares upon God's proceeding with the *Israelites*, in commanding them to set up a brazen Serpent, at the Sight of which those who should be bitten by those venomous Creatures might immediately find their Cure; and asking the Reason why God did not take a shorter Course by destroying all those Serpents, which had given an end to the Plague; he at last satisfies himself with this Reason, that whilst the *Hebrews* beheld the sovereign Medicament in casting up their Eyes to Heaven, they might thereby have Occasion to consider from whence they received their Deliverance, which other-

wife that gross ungrateful People would soon have forgot ; so that to draw them to pay what they ow'd to his Goodness, he was feign to lengthen out their Afflictions.

Some Men are tired with whatever they have enjoyed in this World, and expect no greater Satisfaction should they live a thousand Years ; every Pleasure appears but the same in different Forms, and they all agree in leaving us afflicted with the same or greater Pain they found us in. We walk here on Earth in an enchanted Castle of Shadows and Mockeries, our whole Life is full of Vanity and Mistake ; every Man's Fortune is but a Repetition of *Ixion's*, we court Clouds instead of Divinities, and our most charming Fruitions consist in Emptiness.

Resignation and Tranquility are the golden Mean, and he that steps over this Line on one side or the other, falls into the same Vanity which he bemoans or ridicules in the rest of Mortals. I have perused many Books, and convers'd with more Men, yet none of them can inform me what I am my self ; for in this Life we are fain to peep into the World thro' the close Windows of our Senses, which are so darkned with the Dust

Dust our Passions raise, besides the natural Dulness of our Compositions, that we are fain to use the Opticks of our Philosophy to help our Sight : Yet after all we are still pur-blind, and so are like to be during this mortal Life,

Many great Princes have exchanged the toilsome Glory and royal Fatigues of Empire for the sweet Tranquility and Ease of a Country Farm, and the wholesome Exercises of Agriculture : Thus *Dioclesian* quitted his Throne for the sake of a private Life, and those Hands which had been accustomed to wield a Scepter, became at last voluntarily familiar with the Spade, the Plough, and the Harrow. So Grand *Cyrus*, Monarch of the *Persians*, used to boast of the Gardens planted and sowed with his own Hands ; so may *Louis le Grand* well boast that he hath exceeded all his Predecessors, nay even the Poets themselves in their best Descriptions, in the Gardens and Water-works he hath made at *Marly*, *Versailles* and *Triannon*. 'Tis certain the *Fabii*, the *Lentuli*, the *Ciceros*, and *Pisos* derived their Names from those kind of Vegetables which they signify, and which their Fathers took delight in planting : Was not *Abraham* a Herdsman, and *Moses* the Prophet fa-

miliar with God, and *David* the Prince of Poets, and the most illustrious Heroes amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and other Nations, were Keepers of Sheep, Goats and Oxen; and the *Arabians* are so at this Day, with the *Tartars* and other Nations of the East.

We are all subject to various Changes and Vicissitudes in this mortal State; our Lives are alternatively chequered with Good and Evil; Virtue and Vice have their Turns in the Series of most Mens Actions, Prosperity and Adversity in the Course of our Lives, and no Man can with Truth boast the contrary, for we are all born to be Adventurers which happen in the Pell-mell of humane Conversation.

It is impossible to express to the Life the Pleasure that a Man feels in Solitude, when free and undisturbed he can for many Hours behold the Motions of the Moon and Stars, which raise pious Thoughts and Contemplations within his Breast; his ravish'd Soul is ready to break Prison with Joy, when 'tis inspir'd with certain Demonstrations of Eternity, after which a Man is nauseated with the narrow Principles of ignorant Men, and hates to profane his Reason with the vain Discourse of self conceit-
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ed Fools and Ideots, a Man is then cloy'd with Life, and wishes to die amidst such charming Speculations.

The Cast of an Eye many Times discovers the secret Sentiments of the Heart, so does a shrug of the Shoulders, a pout of the Lip, or any other artificial Gesture; they are all significant and expressive of what Affections and Thoughts we harbour within. There are some secret Characters in every Man's Face which speak the Nature of the Person; we read the hidden Qualities of Men at the first Dash; some Men have the very Signature of Virtue in their Faces, and hence are lasting Friendships often contracted.

I have spent the Spring and Summer of my Life in Vanity, Error, and Ignorance, 'tis time I should provide for the Winter of my Age a Stock of solid Wisdom and Virtue.

It is as natural for the Vulgar to inveigh against generous Souls, as 'tis for Dogs to bark at the Moon, and yet that Planet is not moved at the Snarles of invidious Animals; so Souls truly noble condemn the Censures of the inferior Part of Men.

God is pleas'd so to dispense his temporal Blessings, that he which hath least
hath

hath enough, not only to oblige his Acquiescence but his Thankfulness; tho' every Man hath not all he wishes, yet he hath that which is more valuable than that he complains to want. We must keep our Desires at home, and not suffer them to ramble at things without our Reach: God hath placed none of us in so barren a Soil, in so forlorn a State, but there is something perhaps in it which may afford us Comfort. But if in a sullen Humour we will not cultivate our own Field, because we have perhaps more mind to our Neighbour's, we may thank our selves if we starve; the despising of what God hath given us is but a cold Invitation to farther Bounty, this complaining Humour is a Sickness of the Mind, a perpetual Craving of the Appetite, without any Possibility of Satisfaction, and is the same in the Heart which the *Caninus appetitus* is in the Stomach: The Generality of Mankind being commonly made unhappy, not by any thing without them, but by those restless Impatiences that are within them. And if *Israel*, the Lot of God's own Inheritance, that People whom he had singled out from all the Nations of the World, could forfeit God's Favour by their Unthankfulness, sure none of us
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can suppose we have any surer Entail to it. As God loves a cheerful Giver, so he loves a cheerful Receiver; and we should soon leave off murmuring if we did but seriously consider, that God owes us nothing, and that whatever we receive is an Alms and not a Tribute. *Diogenes* being ask'd what Wine drank the most pleasant, answered, *That which is drunk at another's Cost*; and we can never miss of this Circumstance to recommend our good Things to us, for be they little or much they come *gratis*. It is the Character of an ill Nature to write Injuries in Marble, and Benefits in Dust; and however some may acquit themselves of this Imputation as to Men, yet none can do so in relation to God; and tho' he neither will nor can do Injury, yet we receive every cross Accident with great Resentment, whilst his real Benefits are not at all observed. 'Tis true, some Men's Impatiences have risen so high, as to cast away Life because it was not cloathed with all the Circumstances they wished; and tho' in an angry Fit many Men have with *Jonas* wished to die, yet ten to one should Death then come, they would be as willing to resist it as was the Man in the *Apologue*, who wearied with his
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Burthen of Sticks flung it down and call'd for Death, but when he came found no other Occasion for him but to be help'd up again with his Bundle. 'Tis certain our Repinings proceed not from any Defect of God's Bounty, but from the malignant Temper within us; and as it is an easier Thing to satisfy the Cravings of a hungry Appetite, than to cure the nauseous Recoilings of a surfeited Stomach, so certainly the Discontents of the poor are more easier allay'd than those of the rich; the Indigence of the one hath contracted his Desires into a narrow Compass, but the other, who hath his Desires stretched and extended, is capable of no Satisfaction: Alas! our Body, with all its Enjoyments, is but the lowest Instance of God's Bounty; 'tis but a decent Case for that inestimable Jewel within it; the Soul, like the Ark, is the Thing for which this whole Tabernacle was fram'd. The more intellectual Powers wherewith it is indued have exercis'd the Curiosity, and rais'd the Admiration of the great Contemplators of Nature in all Ages; and tho' the simplest Man knows he has the Faculties of Imagination, Apprehension, Memory, and Reflection, yet the learnedst cannot affirm where they are seated,

seated, or by what Means they operate. And considering whereof we are made, our Preservation is no less a Work of Omnipotence than our first framing; nay, perhaps 'tis rather a greater, for we have now the Principles of Decay within us, which tend to Dissolution; we want the Supplies of several Things without us, the Failing whereof returns us again to our Dust. The Air which refreshes us may at another Time starve us, the Meat that nourishes us may choak us; nay, there is no Creature so inconsiderable which does not at some times serve us, and which may not at any Time (if God permit) ruin us; and if the divine Providence did not draw out the better Properties of these Creatures for our Use, and restrain the worser for our Security, we should quickly return to our Dust. And if the ebbing and flowing of the Sea put the Philosopher into such an Extasy, that he flung himself into it, because he could not comprehend the Cause of it; in what perpetual Raptures of Admiration may we be, who have every Minute within us and about us more and greater Wonders in our Favour, then we deserve the Divine Power should rather exert it self in our Destruction? *Aristippus* being

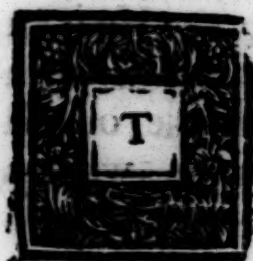
being bemoan'd for the Loss of a Farm; reply'd with some sharpness upon his Condoler, *You have but one Field, and I have three left; why should I not rather grieve for you?* intimating, That a Man is not so much to estimate what he hath lost, as what he hath left; and we may easily be convinced, that even in our worse Estate, our Enjoyments are more than our Sufferings, and God's Acts of Grace do out-number those of his Severity to us!

There is no Man that can with Reason affirm himself to be the most unhappy Man; there being innumerable Distresses of others which he knows not of: Many Sorrows may lie at the Heart of him that carries a smiling Face; and many a Man has been an Object of Envy to those who look only on the Out-side, who yet, to those that know his private Grievs, appears more worthy of Compassion. *Solon* seeing his Friend much oppressed with Grief, carried him to the Top of a Tower that over-look'd the City of *Athens*; and shewing him all the Buildings, said to him, *Consider how many Sorrows have, do, and shall in future Ages inhabit under all those Roofs; and do not vex thy self with those Inconveniencies which are common to Mortality;*

lity, as if they were only yours : It was the saying of Socrates, That if there were a common Bank made of all Men's Troubles, most Men would chuse rather to take those they brought, than to venture upon a new Dividend, but think best to sit down with their own : He is an ill Member of a Community, who in publick Assessments will shuffle off all Payments ; and he is no better, who in this common Tax, which God hath laid upon our Nature, is not content to bear his share. A sick Fortune produces wholesome Counsels, and we reap this Fruit by adverse Fortune, that it brings us at last to Wisdom ; whereas prosperous Fortune, like a strong Gale upon a strong Current, carries a Man in a trice out of the Sight of Quiet ; and if it be not well regulated, it is so far from easing us, that it proves an Oppression to us ; and a busie fortunate Man in the World, calls many his Friends, that were at most but his Guests, and Men flock to him, as they do to a Fountain in hot Weather, both to exhaust and trouble him.

Of

Of W O M E N.



HERE is much to be said in the Praise and Dispraise of Women; as we are Riddles to our selves, so that Sex is in a much higher degree Mysterious; for Women have Ways by themselves unknown to Men, their Windings and Turnings are as intricate as those of Serpents; and if *Dadalus* were now alive, (tho' once the Glory of Labyrinth-makers) he would be troubled to trace Women in all their secret, wild, unknown Mæanders; and yet it is clear, that Womens Inclinations are not only oftentimes better, but their Resolutions greater than Mens; and it is observ'd, that as they are generally more virtuous than Men, so when they deviate to Vice, they are more hardned in it.

The great Actions in which they have born a part, speak the Excellencies of their Nature: *Judith* in sacred Writ is remembred with great Glory; and *Lucretia* in the *Roman* History, by her Resolution, hath raised her self an eternal

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Monument ; neither must that noble Virgin *Clelia* be forgot, who being given in Hostage to King *Porfenna* at the Siege of *Rome*, she escaped her Guards by Night, and mounting a Horse she found in the way, she swam over the *Tyber* into *Rome* ; whereupon, and upon what *Mutius* had a little before done and said, *Porfenna* (as if terrified by the stupendious Resolution of the *Romans*) consented to a Peace.

And tho' some out of Wantonness of Wit, and Extravagancy of Paradoxes, have called the Abilities of Women in question ; yet those Abilities best appearing in Matters of Religion and Government, we are in neither of these without Examples of able Women. The last Age gave us so great a Queen for Government, as scarce any former King did equal ; and this Age such a Queen-Dowager to our late King, that if *Plutarch* were again in Being to write Lives by Parallels, he would not find for her Majesty a Parallel amongst Women, since no Age hath seen her Equal for Beauty, Piety, Virtue, Generosity, and other most Eminent Abilities and Princely Endowments.

The World indeed (which is no just Judge) will scarce allow Women to be Wife; and because they are generally commended enough for other Qualities, the World therefore delights to lessen on one Side, what it is forced to allow on the other: for we usually find in Women a Delicacy of Wit not common to Men, neither are Men's Actions commonly attended with so much Gracefulness as Womens; and Ladies are more skilful than Men in what they do, whether it is the Advantage of pleasing be more Natural to them, or that finding their great Strength to lie there, they make it more their Study from their Childhood: And where Women have submitted themselves to as good Education as Men, their Sex hath not prejudiced them from being great Examples to others; and this Sex hath always been esteem'd and found by the *English* worthy of Empire, and when it hath been enthron'd, it hath bestow'd great Felicity upon the Nation, neither hath it given Place to the other Sex for illustrious Qualities, and the highest Virtues.

In the *Venetian* Story we find certain Matrons of that City were sent in Quality as Ambassadors to an Emperor, with whom that State had Occasion to treat;

great: And in the *Eastern* Parts of the World, it's usual for Women to be Ambassadors; and in Affairs of Religion, Women have ever had a great Hand, tho' sometimes on the Left as well as the Right; sometimes their abundant Wealth, sometimes their Personal Affections to Church-men, and sometimes their indiscreet Zeal; many times the Voices of great Men, both in Civill and Ecclesiastical Assemblies, have been in the Power and Disposition of Women: And hence it is, that in the old Epistles of some Popes, we find as many Letters of those Popes, to the Emperors Wives, Mothers, and Sisters, as to the Emperors themselves.

It would be a kind of unpardonable Envy to conceal some other Excellencies of Women, and the Advantages they have of us in many Respects: Some *Hebrew* Doctors, from the different Names of *Adam* and *Eve*, draw Arguments to prove the Dignity and Perfection of the Female Sex, in that *Adam* signifies Earth, but *Eve* expresses Life. And they affirm, That every Name which God impos'd on any Thing, describes its Nature and Quality, as a Picture represents the Original; and therefore by how much Life is to be esteemed more than Earth, by

so much more excellent, in the Opinion of these *Rabins*, is Woman than Man : They endeavour to strengthen this Opinion, by shewing, that God having made Man, and then survey'd the System of his Works, found nothing more excellently and divinely fram'd than Woman, and therefore in her rested and commenced the Sabbath, as if he could not make the Idea of another Creature more perfect than her, or as if he did not esteem the Universe it self compleat, without the last and most accomplish'd of his Works : And as the End is always first in the Intention, and last in Execution, Woman therefore being the last Work of the Creation, it is thereby evident that she was the chief Design and Aim God Almighty had in building this immense Fabrick, which he furnish'd and adorn'd with infinite Riches and Delights, and then introduced *Eve* as into her Native proper Place, there to reign as absolute Queen over all his Works : And besides, the particular Place of her Creation does much exalt her, in that she was formed in Paradise amongst the Angels, whereas *Adam* was made in the common Waste amongst the Brutes : But the most prevailing Argument is from the stupendious Beauty of that Sex, which

which like finer sorts of Clouds in Summer, seem to ingross the Splendor of the Sun, and to reflect his Beams on the World. How matchless is indeed a Woman's Form? What dazzling Majesty environs her from Hand to Foot? Can you gaze on her lovely Countenance without Astonishment, or fix your Eyes upon her without an Extasy? Indeed, so admirable is the Figure, Voice, and Mean of a beautiful Woman, that he is wilfully Blind, who does not see, whatever Beauties the whole World is capable of, are concentrated in that Sex. Yet after all this, they have their dark Side too, like the rest of mixed Beings: They are the Frontier Passes of the World above and of that below, the Gates of Life and Death, the very Avenues to Heaven or Hell, according as they are used; like Fire they will warm and refresh a Man, if he keeps at a due Distance; but if he approach too near, they scorch and blister him; or like the other Element of Water, they are very good and serviceable, whilst kept within their Bounds, but let them once break down the Banks of Modesty, they'll threaten all with Ruin: In a Word, It is neither safe to Vex them in the least, or Humour them too much; the Excess

of Fondness, as well as the Defect of natural Love, may equally undo us; Prudent Generosity is the only Method of making our selves happy in the Enjoyment of them. The frequent and familiar Converse Women are allow'd with Men, within the Bounds of Modesty, both in *England* and *France*, is a great Advantage to them; and certainly the *Italians* and *Spaniards*, in their so great strictness to this Sex, do much err; for besides the Injustice they act, in depriving them of that Liberty which God and Nature allows them, it is impossible they should ever become more Virtuous by being confin'd to the Melancholly of a Cloister, which must necessarily indulge and minister loose Thoughts, when if they convers'd in the World, they might improve themselves by Knowledge, and the Diversions they would receive from the Company of others, which would keep them from thinking of Ill so frequently.

The present *Jews* of this Age, and *Turks*, have an odd Opinion of Women, believing they are of an inferior Creation to Man, and therefore they exclude them, the first from their Synagogues, the other from their Mosques, which is not only Partial but Profane; for the
Image

Image of the Creator shines as clearly, if not more, in the one, as in the other; and I believe there are as many Female Angels in Heaven as Males, though in Heaven there be many Mansions; to which may be added, that there went better and more refined Atoms to the Creation of Woman than there did of Man.

'Tis true, it was a weak Part in *Eve* to yield to the Seducements of the Serpent, but it was a weaker Thing in *Adam* to be tempted by *Eve* who was the weaker Vessel. The Ancient Philosophers had a better Opinion of that Sex, they ascribed all Sciences to the Muses, all Sweetness and Morality to the Graces, and Prophetick Inspirations to the Sibylls; and we find in all Authors high Examples of the Virtues of Women: And if they did but consider what an Ascendant they have upon Men, and that tho' they were the Source of all our Miseries, yet we still adore them, they would be something more complacent; for it is certainly a sign of good Nature to be amorous of Women; and he is look'd upon as a Monster, or degenerate Person, who feels no Warmths of Passions for that lovely Sex: Women were sent into the World on purpose,

as many think, to blow up those gentle Flames, which sublimate our grosser Mould, and make us more refined: The Love of Women is riveted in our Nature, and our Blood must first grow cold before this Flame can be extinguished; nay, many Times it is more fervent, tho' of a short Duration, in our latest Hours than in our Prime: As when the Oil which feeds a Lamp is almost spent, the startled Flame begins to rouse it self and burn afresh, as if it would feign subsist a little longer, and then it crackles and flashes with greater Noise and Lustre than before, but presently expires; so does this Amorous Fire, when we are nearest our Dissolution, begin to trouble us most, and makes our Souls blaze with Fevers of Desire and Grief, knowing its Period is near, I know some Women are as Shadows, the more you follow them the faster they fly from you; and they are of that odd Humour, that to feed their Pride, they will starve those Natural Passions which are owing from them to Men: I confess, Coyness becomes some Beauties, if handsomely acted, and a Frown from some Faces penetrates more, than the soft Glances of a mincing Smile; but if this Coyness or those Frowns favour of Pride, they

they are odious, if not ridiculous ; for it is a true Rule, where this kind of Pride inhabits, Honour sits not long Porter at the Gate,

There are indeed some Beauties so strong, that no Batteries can do any good upon them ; there are others that are tenable a good while, but will incline to parley at last, and that Fort which begins to parley is half won : For my own Part, I think of Women what *Philip* of *Macedon* thought of Cities, There is none so Inexpugnable but an Ass laden with Gold may enter into it ; and as the *Spaniards* say, Presents may rend Rocks ; Pearls and golden Bullets may do much upon the most impregnable Beauty that is. And yet I knew an *English* Lord that sent a little Dog to a Lady he esteem'd much, with a rich Collar of Diamonds ; she took the Dog, but return'd the Collar ; but what effect it wrought after I cannot say. 'Tis a powerful Sex ; they were too strong for the first, the strongest, and the wisest Man that ever was ; and yet for all their Strength, in Point of Value, the *Italian* says, (I will not say truly) That a Man of Straw is worth a Woman of Gold. In fine, the best Advice I can give in this Case, is, When Women are per-

perverse, retire handsomely, there being as much Honour to be got in a handsome Retreat, as in a hot Pursuit; and by this Retreat you will get a greater Victory than you think of, for you will overcome your self, which is the greatest Conquest that can be made.

Those do great wrong to Ladies that esteem them unable to govern a State, since History tells us, That the Female Sex is not only worthy to bear the Scepter, but that Ladies have preserved and enlarged the Kingdoms of *Spain, England, Denmark, and Sweden*, who never flourished so much as under the two *Elizabeths, Margaret and Christina*: Never King of *England* was better obey'd than Queen *Elizabeth*; the Commanders freely acknowledg'd their Victories proceeded as much from the happy Genius of their Queen as from their own Valour: And *Elizabeth* of *France*, Wife to *Philip IV.* would have re-established the Affairs of *Spain*, if the Impertinency of a Favourite had not held her at a Distance from the Councils of the King her Husband: They are not all sufficiently qualified to Rule, neither are Men. There are but few Women indeed, because the Malice or Envy of Men keeps them off from shew-

shewing their Abilities, and making their Prudence and Generosity admired; and if there were as many Women as Princes upon the Throne, we should often find Female Accomplishments superior to ours, there being many Ladies worthy to Govern, and would be many more, if they were instructed and brought up to great Affairs from their younger Years.



On the Knowledge of God, and
against Atheism.



WITH whatsoever other Knowledge a Man may be endued, he is but ignorant who does not know God, the Duty he owes Him, and the Way to praise Him, who can make him happy or miserable for ever. Tho' a Man could know all that Nature or Art requires, could attain to a Mastery in all Languages, and sound the Depths of all Arts and Sciences, could discover the Interests of all States, the Intrigues of all Courts, the Reasons of all civil Laws and Constitutions, and give an Account of the History of all Ages, and yet should want the Knowledge of God : All this would be but an impertinent Vanity, and a glittering kind of Ignorance. Such a Man would be undone with all his Knowledge, and be like the Philosopher, who gazing upon the Stars fell into the Ditch. For true

true Wisdom regards our own Interest, and he is not a wise Man who does not take Care of his own Concerns.

Nothing can more effectually undermine the Foundation of our Happiness, than to banish the Belief of a God out of the World; for if there were no God, Man would be in a worse Condition than Beasts, who are only sensible of present Pain, and when it is upon them they bear it as they can, not being apprehensive of Evils at a Distance, nor tormented with the Prospect of what may befall them hereafter; but Man is liable to these Evils and many others, which are so much the greater, because they are aggravated by the sharp Reflections of our own Thoughts, and if there be no God we are wholly without Comfort, and without any other Remedy than what Time will give; But if we believe there is a God that takes Care of us, this must be a mighty Comfort to us, both under our present Affliction, and the Apprehension of Evils at a Distance, for in that Case we are secure, that either God by his Providence will prevent the Evils we fear, or will support us under them when they come, or will make them the Occasion of a greater Good to us, by turning them
either

either to our Advantage in this World, or the Encrease of our Happiness in the next.

Atheism hath struck on a sudden into such a Reputation, that it scorns any longer to sculk, but shews it self more Publickly than most Men dare do the contrary; nothing passes for Wit that hath not its Stamp, and with it there is no Metal of so base Alloy but will go current; every dull Man that can but stoutly disdain his Maker, hath by it secured his Title to Ingenuity: And yet it is impossible for any Man who sees only the smallest Part of the Universe, to doubt of a Free and Supream Being, until by the Sense of his Wickedness it becomes his Interest there should be none; for certainly there never was any Man who said there was no God, but he wished it first.

'Twas good Counsel given to the *Athenians*, to be very careful, *Philip* of *Macedon* was dead, before they express'd their Joy at his Death, lest they might find him alive to revenge their hasty Triumph; and so let the Atheists be sure there is no God, before they presume thus to defy him, lest they find him at last assert his Being in their Destruction.

The great Mystery of Atheism, is, that Men are wedded to their Lusts, and are resolved upon a wicked Course, and so it becomes their Interest to wish there were no God, and to believe so if they can; so that nothing but the Power of vicious Inclinations sways Mens Minds towards Atheism, and when Mens Judgments are once byass'd, they do not believe according to the Evidence of Things, but according to their Humour and Interest; for when Men live as if there were no God, it becomes expedient for them that there should be none, and then they endeavour to persuade themselves so, and are glad to find Arguments to fortify themselves in that Persuasion.

That there have been many false Gods devised, is rather an Argument that there is a true One, than that there is none: There would be no Counterfeits but for the sake of something that's real; For tho' all Pretenders seem to be what they really are not, yet they pretend to be something that really is: There would be no Brass Money if there were not good and lawful Money: *Bristol* Stones would not pretend to be Diamonds, if there never had been any Diamonds: Those two great Counterfeits, *Lambert*
Simmel

Simmel and *Perkin Warbeck*, had never been set up in *Henry VII's* Time, if there had not once been a real *Plantagenet* and Duke of *York*: So the Idols of the Heathens, tho' they were set up in Affront to the true God, yet they rather prove there is One, than the contrary.

It is evident to common Sense, that Man is not sufficient of himself to his own Happiness; he is liable to many Miseries, which he can neither prevent nor redress: He is full of Wants which he cannot supply, and of Infirmities which he cannot remove, and obnoxious to Dangers against which he cannot provide: Consider a Man without God's Protection, and he is sure of nothing he enjoys, and uncertain of every thing he hopes for. He grieves for what he cannot help, desires what he cannot obtain; courts Happiness, which flies from him the farther he pursues it. His Hopes and Expectations are bigger than his Enjoyments, his Fears and Jealousies more troublesome than the Evils themselves: So that the Atheist deprives himself of all Comfort that the Apprehensions of a God can give a Man, and yet is liable to all the Trouble and Disgust of those Apprehensions.

Of RELIGION.

MOST People take up their Religion for a Fashion, and receive it according to the Country where they are born, and are therefore of that Religion; and the Reason why we are *Christians* rather than *Jews*, *Turks*, or *Heathens*, is because Christian Religion had the Fortune to come first in our Way, and bespeak us at our Entrance into the World. The Christian Religion may make *Archymedes's* Challenge, Give it but where it may set its Foot, allow but a sober Advertence to its Proposals, and it will move the whole World: It comes with most convincing Arguments, but these must first obtain Attention, before they can force Assent. They will most infallibly weigh down the Scales, if you try and examine their Weight.

But it's to be fear'd we are so stupid and unconcern'd, that all the persuasive Rhetorick of the Gospel will make no Impression upon us, all the Avenues of our Reason are so blocked up, that they will find no way of approaching. We are like the *Indian Serpents Philostratus* mentions, Proof against all Charms, but such as with their glittering Splendor assault our Eyes. Nothing moves us but what courts our Senses, and what is not gross enough to be seen, we think too nice to be consider'd. The Form and Name of Christianity Men find ready to their Hands, and it cost them no Labour to call themselves Christians, as they do *French* or *English*, only because they were born within such a Territory, and have taken up their Religion as part of their Fate, the Temper of their Climate, the Entail of their Ancestors, the Profession of it descends to them by way of Inheritance, and like young careless Heirs, they are never at the Charge to survey it, to inform themselves of the Revenues of it, what Burthen it lies under, or what Advantages it promises.

It is to be fear'd that of those vast Multitudes that have entred the Baptismal Vows,

Vows, most of them weigh it as little when they should perform it, as they did when they made it, and have no other Notion of Baptism, but as a Custom of the Place, or a Time of Feasting, and consider no farther Significance in those Spiritual Bonds, than they did in their Swadling Clothes; and can give no better account why they took on them Christ's Livery, than why they wear such Garments as the common Fashion of the Country prescribes them: But where Men are so Ignorant, it must necessarily infer, their Parents Negligence either in not infusing, or their own stubborn Perverseness in resisting Instruction. But it is more probable to conclude the former, since if Children were early instructed, Knowledge would insensibly insinuate it self before their Years had arm'd them with Obstinacy enough to make Head against it. And when by the Parents Remissness the proper Seed-time is lost, the Soil grows stiff and untractable, the Labour of Learning averts their Childhood, and the Shame of it their Manhood, and they grow old in their Ignorance, and are ready to leave the World before they come to know any thing of that

which is to succeed it. This is a common and despicable Case, which loudly accuses their Parents, who thus wretchedly hazard their Children's greatest Concernment. And as it was a Fault in their Parents to let their Children want those necessary Infusions, 'tis surely so in themselves, to let their ripper Years continue in that Ignorance, having scarce ever thought of their Religion, since they con'd their Lesson to avoid Correction. And then 'tis no wonder if they pass in the same Forgetfulness with other the Occurrences of that slippery Age: But if to some their Memory hath been so faithful as to retain those early Impressions which were made in it; yet alas, it avails little; for a Man's Remembrance of his Creed may tell him there is a God, and that he is Almighty; but if his Reason be so much asleep as not to infer from thence the Necessity of Reverencing and Obeying him, he may repeat the Creed every Day, and yet be an Atheist.

The Difficulty of removing what is imprinted in us by Education is very hard; that which Men take in by Education being next to that which is Natural; and most Men owe the Principles of

of their Religion to their Education, or Climate wherein they were Born, being bred up either to confirm those Principles their Parents instilled into them, or by a general Consent proceed in the Religion of their Country, there being a Geography of Religions as well as Lands, and every Climate is not only distinguish'd by their Laws and Limits, but circumscribed by their Doctrines, not considering whether true or false, but only according to their Interest: And if we consider the Lives of most Men of all Conditions, we shall find the Honours and Pleasures of the World, which we renounced in Baptism, are the very Gods which share the World amongst us.

Tho' we have seen Overturnings of States and Kingdoms, and great Changes, yet the true Church, that adores that God that was ever ador'd, subsists without Interruption, and that Religion which hath always been opposed, still subsists. It hath many a Time been almost extinguished, yet God hath always been pleas'd to raise and recover it by Wonders of his Goodness and Power; and what is also very observable is, That it hath never submitted

to yield or bow to the Will of Tyrants. Let us but take a serious View of the Apostles chosen by *Jesus Christ*: Those Persons that were Ignorant and Unlearned, of a suddain were found sufficiently able to put to silence the wisest Philosophers, and Courageous enough to oppose the greatest Kings or Tyrants that resisted the Christian Religion which they taught and preach'd. If we see a Miracle, say some Men, we would be converted; they think there is no more in Conversion, but to believe there is a God, when the Devil does that and trembles; but true Conversion consists in Humbling our selves before the Saviour of the World, whom we have so often provoked, and who might justly every Minute destroy us; to confess, we can do nothing without him, and that we have deserved nothing but his Displeasure. It consists in acknowledging that there is a great Enmity betwixt God and us, and without a Mediator we could have had no Access nor Favour.

I know very well, that good Men may, and often do, blemish the Reputation of their Piety, by over-acting some Things in Religion, by an ungrateful

grateful Austerity and Sourness, which Religion does not require; a substantial, discreet and unaffected Piety makes no great Noise nor Shew, but expresses it self in a constant serious Devotion, accompanied with good Works and Kindness, which makes a Man pleasing both to God and his Neighbour: Religion makes Men obedient to Government, and conformable to Laws; it makes Men peaceable to each other, it heals the Natures of Men, and sweetens their Spirits; it corrects their Passions, and mortifies all those Lusts, which are the Causes of Enmity and Divisions: If Men would live as Religion requires they should do, the World would be a quiet Habitation: And the true Reason, why the Societies of Men are so full of Tumult and Disorder, is, Because there is so little true Religion amongst them; so that if it were not for some small Reminders of Piety and Virtue, which are yet scatter'd amongst Mankind, humane Society would in a short Time disband and run into Confusion, the Earth would grow wild and become a great Forest, and Men would turn Beasts of Prey one towards the other: So that Religion hath so great

an Influence upon the Felicity of Man, that it ought to be upheld out of Regard to their temporal Peace and Prosperity, as well as to their Eternal. Religion does qualify all Sorts of Men, and makes them in publick Affairs the more serviceable, Governors apter to Rule with Conscience, and Inferiors for Conscience Sake the willinger to obey. And 'tis a great Truth, that all Duties are by so much the better perform'd, by how much the Men are more Religious from whose Abilities the same proceed; and if Magistrates, who are employ'd about the publick Administration of Justice, follow it only as a Trade for Gain's-Sake, the Formality of Justice will then only serve to smother Right, and that which was necessarily ordain'd for the common Good, will be the Cause of common Misery.

Religion has a Superiority above all other Things, and is as necessary to our living Happy in this World, as it is to our being saved in the next; without it a Man is an abandon'd Creature, one of the worst Beasts Nature hath produced, and fit only for the Society of Wolves and Bears, and therefore in
all

all Ages it hath been the Foundation of Government. And therefore, as nothing is better for being Sour, it would be hard Religion should be so, which is the best of Things, and is so Cheerful, and so far from being always at odds with good Humour, that it is inseparably united to it, and nothing of Unpleasantness belongs to it. A Virtue stuck with Bristles is too rough, it must be adorned with some Flowers, or else it will be unwillingly entertained; so that even where it may be fit to strike, do it gently; and where one takes Care to do it, he would wound others more, and hurt himself less by soft Strokes, than by being harsh and violent.

Most People keep to that Religion which is grown up with them, thinking that the best; and the Reason of staying in it upon that Ground, is somewhat stronger for Women, than will be allow'd for Men, who are bound to search the Truth.

Tho' Kings be Gods on Earth, yet they are Subjects of Heaven, and accountable to God: Religion in a King strengthens his Authority, it procures Veneration, and gains a Reputation;
and

and in all Publick Affairs, so much Reputation is really so much Power; and even in Men of low Degree, Religion will command some Reverence and Respect: But in Persons of eminent Place and Dignity, it casts a Lustre upon them, and by a strong Reflection doubles the Beams of Majesty; as the Clearness of the Eye disposes for a quicker Sight, so the Clearness of the Mind disposes us to more perfect Acts of Religion. Few Things are well learn'd but by easy Precepts, those well infused will make them Natural, and we are never sure of retaining what is valuable, till by continual Habit we have made it a Piece of us.

We must not think the Rewards of Heaven, like ripe Fruit upon a full laden Bough, should stoop down to us, to be taken by every idle and wanton Hand: That Heaven should be prostituted to the lazy Desires and ordinary Endeavours of slothful Men. God will not so much disparage eternal Life and Happiness, as to bestow it upon those who have so low an Opinion of it, as not to think it worth taking Pains for. We must use our best Endeavours, doing what we can, and then

then we may expect God's gracious Assistance: But when Men expect Religion should cost them no Pains, and that Happiness should drap into their Laps without any Labour on their Part, and that God should snatch them up into Heaven when they Die, as he did the good Thief, they will at last find themselves much mistaken in their Measures: 'Tis troublesome at first, I confess, for a Man to begin a new Life; but when he begins to habituate himself to a Religious and Virtuous Life, the Trouble will soon go off, and unspeakable Pleasure succeed in its Place. It was an excellent Rule, which *Pythagoras* gave to his Scholars, *Optimum vite genus eligito nam consuetudo faciet jucundissimum: Resolve always to do what is most reasonable, and Custom will soon make it easy.* And those, who upon pretence of the Difficulties of Religion, abandon themselves to a wicked Course of Life, may easily be convinced, (tho', perhaps, when 'tis too late) that they took more Pains to make themselves Miserable, than would have been to bring them to Happiness.

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The Difference betwixt an Atheist and an Enthusiast is this: The Atheist thinks nothing Unlawful, as believing no God to judge him: An Enthusiast thinks every Thing that comes into his Head not only Lawful, but the Inspiration of God, and as such is prompted with a fiery Zeal to propagate it with the Hazard of his Life, the overturning of Government, and embroiling the World: And when a Man is once fully possess'd with this Spirit, which works upon his Imagination, his Reason is wholly clouded, his Discourses are inconsistent, he has nothing in his View but his present Impulse, and as that alters, he pursues the quite contrary, with the same Vehemence, not reflecting that it is opposite to his former Sentiments. Now this is most certainly a great Excess of Pride, which yet recommends it self to many well-inclined and religiously disposed People, under the Notion of Abstraction from the World, of Humility, and Self-Denial: For what greater Exaltation of ones self can be imagin'd, and indeed Rebellion against God, than to think my self exempted, upon account of my own Holiness, from those Institutions

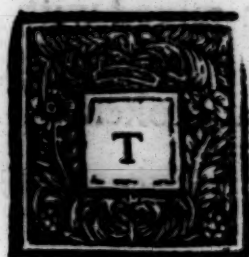
tutions which God has appointed, and from that Authority which he has ordain'd amongst Men, and by whose Hands he does dispense his Blessings to us? What greater Delusion than to think, that we can contrive a shorter and safer Way to Heaven than that which God hath commanded us? Not to be contented with that Station wherein he hath placed us, but to raise our selves above that Order by which he governs the World, (who as long as they administer Justice are to be revered as God's Vicegerents upon Earth;) to despise Dominion, and speak Evil of Dignities, which is a Sign of Reprobation: It is no less, than assuming the Power of God to our selves, to usurp his Throne, and as far as in us lies to take the Government of the World out of his Hands: All this is the Effect of Enthusiasm: All the Looseness and Wickedness of this Age, is to have no Principles, but guided wholly by our Humour and Fancy; and most of the Heresies or Schisms which have divided the Church came from this Fountain.

St. *Augustin* tells us, That the mighty Success and strong Prosperity of the *Romans* was a Reward given them by God for their eminent Justice and other Virtues: As to particular Persons, the Providences of God are promiscuously given in this World; so that we cannot certainly conclude, God's Love or Hatred to any Person by any Thing that befalls him in this Life: But God deals otherwise with Nations, because publick States and Communities, as such, can only be rewarded and punished in this World; for in the next, all publick Societies will be dissolved, and every Man shall give an Account of himself to God: The great crying Sins of a Nation cannot hope to escape publick Judgments, which God may defer for a Time to give People a longer space of Repentance, but sooner or later they have Reason to expect his Vengeance. God hath Lead-en Feet, but Iron Hands, he is long e're he punishes, but strikes home at last; and usually the longer Punishment is delay'd, it is the heavier when it comes. Experience in all Ages hath made this good. We find through the History of the Old Testament the interchangeable Providences of God, towards the People

ple of *Israel*, always suited to their Manners. They were constantly prosperous or afflicted, as Virtue and Piety flourished and declined amongst them. And thus God deals with all others: The *Roman* Empire, whilst that People remained virtuous, was firm and strong as Iron; but upon the Dissolution of their Manners, the Iron was soon mixed with miry Clay, and the Feet upon which that Empire stood were soon broken.



Of **KINGS** and **PRINGES**, and
the Education of a PRINCE.



HERE are found admirable Occurrences in the Lives of all Men, but much more in Princes, who moving in a higher Sphere, their Actions are more conspicuous and worthy to be transmitted to Posterity, as Instructive to their Successors: And tho' Prosperity is more agreeable to our Nature, yet Adversity is more beneficial, when Princes make a right Improvement of it, to shun those Rocks whereon some Princes have been split.

It is very necessary to accustom a young Prince to divert himself amongst pleasant Men; one cannot find a more sure and less painful Way to render him a most accomplish'd Prince, than having such Courtiers about him in his Youth; (but the Difficulty is to find such :) A Prince will not fail to learn insensibly the

the Manners and Actions of those; and whatsoever he gains that way becomes Natural to him. Those that are near him should make use, as much as is possible, of that way to Instruct him; it being absolutely necessary, that those who have Wit, and are well-bred Men, should not only be receiv'd by the Prince, but that Means be taken to find them out, for commonly such Men are not over-forward to shew themselves: They know how to be Content with their own small Fortunes; and besides, such Men are so rarely met with, that those who understand them, need not fear to be troubled with too many of them; for I do not remember, in all my Time, (who have spent many Years in the World) to have seen so few of them as at present.

To make a Prince speak well, it is necessary to mix a little Art and Study, and a Prince ought to have something of both; for to the compleating of a worthy honest Man, there is nothing more necessary than Well-speaking and Well-doing: What Gracefulness so clear a Source gives to all our Actions? How doth it beautify our Words and Thoughts? How amiable a Thing it is

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to

to speak well when Sincerity goes along with it?

Young Princes are commonly more Active than Speculative, and most easily carried away with the Pleasures of the World; yet there are some, who by Nature are serious enough, and are capable to retire into themselves, as King *Charles* the First, and King *James* the Second. It were to be wished, that a young Prince be neither too Active, nor too Serious, the best Temper is to partake of both, and be able to pass with Ease from the one to the other. Some Attempts might be made to give a young Prince the Apprehension of certain Things with which Children are not to entertain themselves, as surpassing their ordinary Capacity; for tho' a Child understands not at first what is said to him, yet it prepares him against another Time, and they are as little Essays of Reason, which come not all at once. It is necessary for him that would attain Virtues, to begin gradually at the lowest Step, to guard his Senses, and set a Watch upon the Avenues of his Passions, for Man becomes neither perfectly Virtuous or Vitious all at once; and *Jesus* the Son of *Syrach* hath said,
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He that contemns little Things shall fall by little and little. The smallest Occasion suffices to say something that pleases; and it is of much Importance to form a Prince's Will agreeably, for then he will take Pleasure to hearken to a Man that hath Judgment and Wit, and will be desirous to be instructed by him: And if Persons about a Prince have a Grace in their Words and Actions, the Prince will retain the Manner how to behave and express himself. This agreeable way of Talking is of great Consequence, and the surest way to acquire it, is to let such as have and practise it, come into the Prince's Company: Those Princes who are young, and understand not all that's said to them, want often that some Body put them in Mind; and when Princes keep Company with such, they take some Observations which they should never have of themselves; and we our selves find, if many Things had been discovered to us in our Youth, which we have since found by our own Experience and Reflections, we had saved much Time; and one Word to the Purpose then, had made us comprehend a World of Things, which we know not, nor shall ever know whilst we live: But we reflect not

on those Opportunities till we have lost them, and we are not aware of them, till it be too late: All the World commits Faults, but the greatest are only perceived.

Those who have the Education of young Princes should endeavour to make them Love or Hate that, which deserves the one or the other, that the Prince may have a good Taste or Discernment, for this would make him understand what he should Learn, and the Means to be excellent in it: For if a Prince had beforehand a right Apprehension of Good and Evil, the very Course of Things would instruct him, and the Aversion to what is Evil, whensoever he saw it, would be sufficient to avoid it: A young Prince cannot have too curious a Taste to discern betwixt true and false Pleasures, and not to be deceiv'd in either. The most agreeable way of instructing, is, to do that Well which we see others do Ill, by which we make our Life more easy: Besides, those that are about a young Prince, should endeavour, that the Wit and Heart of the Prince should be disposed as they ought to be: 'Tis true that Wit finds out the Way to attain Perfection, but the Heart is necessary to put in Practice what is judged
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to be the *Best*; and that which we call the having a good Taste or Discernment is oftenest found in a young Prince, who is usually born with more than an ordinary Genius; though a late Eminent Philosopher holds, That all Children naturally have near the same Capacity, and that the chief Difference proceeds from the Care that is taken to inform Children: But I think the first Advantage is rather to be ascribed to a happy Birth, and that Art does afterwards perfect it; and I have always believed we should not so much wish for any Thing in a young Prince, as Wit, it being impossible not to have it, if he be Educated in the Company of some People; as to the learning by *oneself*, it very seldom happens that the Mind, without some extraordinary Help, takes the right Course to do it: 'Tis true indeed, our late King *Charles* the Second was a very excellent and knowing Man, and had a great Insight into Men and Manners; though in his Youth, by the Reason of our intestine Troubles, and the Rebellion raised against his Royal Father, he was taught very little; yet he had an excellent Governor in his tender Years, which was the Marquis of *Hartford*, and after him,

the Earl of *Newcastle*; but when that Prince went Generalissimo into the *West of England*, his Highness had the poorest and weakest Man for his Governor that I ever saw; yet they who had Interest in the Prince, and were near about him, instructed him in so pleasant a Way, that he was most agreeable in Conversation; And when he came to the Throne, if he had loved Business as well as he understood it, he had been one of the greatest Princes of the last Age; but he was wholly addicted to his Pleasures, and Chamber-Practice, which much shortened his Days; and yet he may be reckon'd amongst the most admir'd Princes of his Time, who had form'd and instructed himself amongst the best-bred Princes in *Europe*.

A young Prince should never be overburthen'd with a long Chain of Instructions; his Tutor should rather chuse to speak few Things, and let each Precept take its Effect, and should give the Prince a Reason of all he tells him; so that the Prince of his own Accord might insensibly make the Application to himself; it being much better to enlighten his Understanding, than to charge his Memory.

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And above all Things, he should teach the Prince to be Free and Affable, which Virtues make Princes to be belov'd; and it is of great Consequence for a young Prince, to have the Art of making himself be belov'd: When Majesty and Civility are mix'd together, it makes Men find with Pleasure that such Princes are their Masters. The more Princes condescend, the more ready are their Servants to submit, especially if they be well-bred Persons, who never presume too much. The most Eminent Princes were wont to communicate freely, and were very familiar: *Cæsar* was so with his own Soldiers, which so charm'd them, that when they fought for his Glory, they found nothing difficult, and were not apprehensive of Danger (Heaven takes those Hearts into its Protection,) and in fighting Fifty Battles, which *Cæsar* did without losing one, he was always very Active, and yet never receiv'd any Hurt: Such Princes are always belov'd; and tho' Fortune (which is ever inconstant) leaves their Side, yet Glory and Honour never forsake them.

Cæsar was of this Number: He had nothing in him which favour'd not of Grandeur; he was brave and full of

Civility ; he would hazard his own Person, to save the meanest of his Soldiers. He lov'd all those that loved his Fortune ; he shar'd with them the Glory, as he did the Danger ; he understood well how to make himself be Belov'd, *Ut Ameris, Ama*, which is a sure way if it be perform'd handsomely ; the principal Secret consists in managing it so, that the Persons whom one loves should be glad of it.

There is nothing so much to be fear'd in a young Prince, as giving him an ill Master ; for the best natural Parts would be but of little use, if Care be not taken to improve them : One can never take any thing right without having learnt it ; and who can believe that either to do a Thing well, or to do it better, if one doth it well, that Study can ever hinder it. We see in all Exercises, how much good Masters are necessary ; and it were very strange, that the Body should be capable of Instruction, and not the Mind ; for what likelihood is there, that Practice and good Masters are effectual to make a young Man skilful in riding the Great Horse, and that to the making of an accomplish'd Person, they should both be needless.

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The Body and the Mind are seldom as one would wish; but the Defects of the Body seem more difficult to be corrected; for the Mind is naturally supple, and may be redress'd if a right Course be taken; and the Reason why it falls out otherwise is, when we learn to do a Thing of an ill Master, one learns to do it ill; and it is much more difficult to chuse good Masters for framing the Mind, than for the Body, for the Advantages of the Body are much more remarkable than those of the Mind: To be able and well-bred to such a Degree as one would have a great Prince, one cannot know too many Things, if we have Skill to make a right Use of them, and know how to value them; but to have read much, or to have learn'd a Number of different Opinions, discovers nothing of Certainty; for we know nothing well but what we see clearly, and that which we can make others see presently, and understand if they be clear-sighted, and we should mistrust all which we see as through a Cloud, and which we cannot make plain to the Sight of another. There are some Princes who would have been very gallant Men, if Care had been taken at first to put them in a right way,
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and to have shew'd them what was to be done. For a great Prince, upon whom the Happiness of the Publick depends, by whose Example his People will fashion themselves, as being the most noble Model, no Care in the World should be neglected: The Business is to make a young Prince Happy, and that all who live under him may be so; it being reasonable that those should a little share in the Happiness who are in Duty obliged to sacrifice themselves for prosecuting of it; and therefore this first Point of their Education is of much greater Importance to them, than to private Persons: For when Princes are no longer under the Conduct of Governors, all that they do, or say, is approv'd, or at least it is so in Appearance; For no Person comes into their Presence but with a design to please them, because although he loves them, yet one easily inclines to love their Favour more; and it were a great Imprudence for any Man to draw the Hatred of his Prince upon himself, and to advise him as he would one of his particular Friends, unless at first the Prince had signified his Pleasure to have it so: However, those Persons that are near about Princes that be young, (if they are not too much sway'd by Interest)

rest) may very securely tell them in an agreeable manner, all which may contribute to their Glory and Happiness: 'Tis certain, a very easy Thing to give them good Advice as to their Glory, but it is not so to their Happiness, which depends more upon the Temper; and whosoever will ascertain a Prince what will make him happy, must know him perfectly well, for most commonly we our selves know not what would be best for our own Happiness: But when all is done, it seems to me, that with a very little Help, it were no difficult Thing for a young Prince to be happy.

Certainly, that young Prince is in a fair way to it, who sees himself one of the first amongst the Masters of the World, and that Fortune hath nothing greater to give. And therefore Princes should consider what Pleasure it is to do good, that there is nothing more Noble, and that this Delight was made only for Princes. For the more Favours they bestow, the more they are in Condition to grant, provided their Gifts be with Choice and Esteem, which supports their Grandeur, and renders them more Powerful: It is not Riches that are principally desir'd from Kings, but Employ-

Employments and Trusts, and that which makes Men desire high Commands, is not for Conveniency of Life, for their Lives are by them made more troublesome; but it is Hopes of making it appear, that they have Merit in them, and are useful to the Publick; and when just Persons that have Worth and Fidelity are put into Employments, they make themselves soon known, and their Princes are well serv'd: We have lately seen in *England*, a sad Example of taking false Measures herein; the ill Choice of our late King's Ministers was his Ruin: Besides, what greater Slavery can there be, than that Princes are chain'd to their Posts, and cannot make themselves *less*, all their Words and Actions are descanted upon, and made publick Discourse. A Prince cannot with Dignity quit his Guards. Fortune hath him in Custody: A Train besets him where-ever he goes, and there is no making an Escape, but still he that is the Master of many is the Servant of more.

The great and honourable Fame of a King in this World depends more upon his wise Administration than upon his private Morals; the Goodness of his Government depends chiefly upon those that advise him, and execute under him, it
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being an infallible Maxim, *That he is the worst (at least the most unhappy) King, who hath the worst Counsellors and Ministers under him.*

Princes should endeavour to couple warlike and peaceable Virtues together, to know at all Times how to Rule their own State, and protect their Subjects; to honour the Good, and chastise the Wicked; to change the Pleasures of the Body into those of the Mind, to seek their Content in the Acquisition of those Things which may raise them above other Persons: But this Perfection is not easily met with at Court, where every Thing stands in Opposition to good Designs; Princes are born to govern, and therefore they must govern well, without amusing themselves with Knowledge more curious than useful, which would better become a Professor of Philosophy than a Prince.

There is no doubt but Sciences do adorn the Titles of Princes, as Diadems do their Heads, and Jewels their Crowns, but the most necessary Philosophy for a Prince, is to know how to do Justice to his People, and to defend them from their Enemies, and to understand what Persons are able to serve him well; nevertheless many Princes enter upon the Government before they have pass'd an
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Apprenticeship for it, and take least Care of what concerns them most.

Foreign Languages are most necessary for a Prince, and serve for a great Ornament to him; the Princes Electors of *Germany* would admit no Man heretofore to the Imperial Dignity, unless he was able to speak *Latin*, *Italian*, *Sclavonian* and *Dutch*; and the Emperor *Frederick* the Second could besides speak elegant *French*, *Spanish* and *Turkish*, which was very rare in his Time: He was also skilful in the antient vulgar *Greek*; and indeed, the Intercourse of Princes, who live upon the Continent, permits them not to neglect these Languages without running a great Inconveniency. The *English* Genius for clear speaking and writing is always to the Point; they look upon rambling Discourses with Contempt, and as Men of Reason, they stand more upon Strength of Argument, than all the Pomp of Rhetorick, not so much concern'd to move the Hearer's Affections, as to warm his Reason. Perhaps no Nation is more Satyrical, and quicker in Repartees, which argues Wit to express themselves significantly; we have a most happy Language, compounded chiefly of *Saxon*, *Latin* and *French*, of which
Saxon

Saxon is the Stock, the other two being ingrafted into it. The *English* is so significant, that it does almost equalize the *Greek*, and does even exceed the *Latin*, in a particular Grace of compounding Words, which is as great a Beauty as can be in Language. In Point of Sweetness, the *French* and the *Italian* run smoother, but they want Sinews, especially the last. The *Spanish* is Majestical but boisterous; the High *Dutch* Manly, but very harsh; whereas the *English* is both sweet and manly. If we look upon the famous Men of our Nation, which have been Learned, or Soldiers, we shall find many very famous, as Venerable *Bede*, Sir *Thomas Moor*, Lord *Bacon*, *Smith*, *Spelman*, *Camden*, *Selden*, *Daniel*, *Drayton*, *Ben. Johnson*, *Shakespeare*, *Beaumont*, *Fletcher*, Sir *Philip Sidney*, *Cowley*, *Oldham*, *Dryden*, and many others. But it is impossible to learn Languages without travelling, which embellishes the Minds of those that use it prudently: A young Prince that travels will understand Nations, imitate what they have of good, and avoid the rest; he should heedfully regard the Laws and Fundamental Maxims of State, the Inclinations of Sovereigns, their Revenues, the Order of their Courts, their Alli-

Alliances, their Power, and their Favourites; that Prince who hath seen *Europe* with Judgment knows every Thing that can carry him to glorious Actions, and certainly a young Prince that travels, profits more in two Years, than if he had stay'd in his Study ten Years; Travel teaches them to understand the Plenty of Countries, the Force of Rivers, and which are the most eminent Places of Traffick and Commerce, the Convenience of Bridges, the Distance of Places, the Strength and Situation of Cities and Castles, the Number of the People, the Inclination of the Subjects, the Humour of Princes, the Sympathy and Antipathy of Nations, and many other Things which may instruct a General of an Army to fortify Places, to intrench, to Camp an Army advantageously, to draw up a Body of Men in Battle, to lead an Army to fight, and to shew themselves eminent Examples to their Followers. Travel also gives a Prince Lessons of Temperance, Modesty and Patience; and the Languages which are useful to all Men are most necessary to Princes, and to those who would have any Command of Armies. *Spanish* is the noblest of all Bastard Languages, it not being a Mother-Tongue,
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but compounded of *Latin, Gothick, Arabick* and *Spanish*: The *Romans, Goths,* and *Moors,* having reign'd some Ages in that Country, did introduce a Mixture of all those Languages. A Prince should also learn the *Mathematicks,* which will teach him to besiege, and fortify Places. These are the most needful Studies for a Prince, and not to spend his Time upon Logical Notions, but to chuse such Studies as are proportionable to his Condition: It is sufficient that a Prince be ready in sacred and prophane History; that he take a Delight in some Books, and sometimes consult the Dead, who will say that which none of the Living dare say to him; he should read such Books as may teach him to know the Condition of his Friends and Enemies; he should learn Principles of Generosity and Honour distinctly; to know those that love the Publick Good and Interest, and to favour them with such Offices as they deserve, and to punish them that do otherwise: And tho' it be honourable for Kings to aggrandize their best deserving Subjects, yet a Prince ought not to diffuse his Graces too prodigally, lest the Servant should become the Master; which in all Courts, and at

all times hath proved very prejudicial. The Planets would have little Regard to the Sun, if they had no need of his Light; nor a Servant of his Master, if he could do him no good; Princes ought therefore to be circumspect in Distribution of their Favours, if they would not lose that Honour and Respect which their Subjects give them. A King gives an Account of his Actions to none but God; he ought nevertheless to act equitably, and not to plunge brave Men into Despair, than which nothing is more dangerous, who having lost their Estates by their most faithful and long Services, thinking they have nothing more to lose, are capable to make the greatest Report of their Wrongs; 'tis true, Kings may take the Benefits bestowed, when they that received them become unworthy of them; but before a King comes to that Extremity, he should endeavour to reduce them to their Duty, and having tried all fair Ways, the Prince must be careful not faintly to execute his Resolution, nor rashly to enter upon a great Action, which in Prudence he must afterwards abandon. A Prince should think seriously of a Thing before he enters upon it; but having begun, he should carry

ry it through, for there is nothing more repugnant to Authority of Kings than to act by halves, nor any Thing that encourages Subjects so much to Rebellion as to see their Masters are afraid of them. A Prince ought to spend some Time in reading, especially History, which will render him able and knowing, and it is a good Guide, and what concerns Life, which it does antidate, and makes the Reader contemporary with the Times past, and by running up beyond his Nativity, the Prince will be something the wiser for it, and will have a Stock of Sense, without much Trouble of his own; and it is of great Use to perswade by Example that which we have a Mind to. History is a kind of Experience, and we may reap much by it; besides, there are some Histories written by so good Hands, which tho' we know, yet it is a Pleasure to read them, as *Thucydides*, *Polibius*, *Cesar's Commentaries*, with the Duke of Rohan and Sir Clement Edmond's Observations upon them, and *Hugo Grotius de Jure Pacis & Belli*, and *Selden's Mare clausum*; but to read over-much, and to be constantly poring upon Books, brings neither Pleasure nor Profit. Reading too much over-charges Nature; it

is Thought and Digestion that makes Reading profitable, which being well managed gives a great Insight into all Things. He that depends upon his own Experience, hath but a few Materials to work upon; and to take Measures wholly from Books without looking into Men and Business, is like travelling in a Map, where only Countries and Cities are well distinguish'd; but Villages and private Houses are seldom or never marked.

Young Princes, after some Hours in their Study, should bestow some others upon Sports, because the Mind being taken up too long with Contemplation will disrelish Study, if it be not refreshed with some Recreations, in which Hunting is one of the most agreeable to Princes; and because Youth runs easily down the Hill towards Pleasures, therefore Princes should sometimes play at Tennis; tho' most commonly young Princes would rather endure the Pains of Hunting a whole Day than studying but two Hours, which they think a Labour, which is really nothing but pure Delight, and Studying would be a sensual Pleasure, if the Mind were capable of any in those younger Years. For those that have once tasted it can
never

never take themselves off again in such Manner that they become despicable and good for nothing else. As for Exercises, Hunting has always been the Recreation of Princes, nor never disesteemed but by those that know not the Benefit of it. It withdraws the great Men about the Prince from Idleness, which is the Mother of all Vices, or from Gaming, which is unsuitable to their Condition: It makes Princes strong, active and bold. Almost all Princes love Hunting, and apply themselves to it, because it is a Representation of War; a good Huntsman is, or may easily be a good Soldier. To surprize the Wolf or the Fox, a Man must use a certain Subtilty, which teaches us to lay Ambushes for the Enemy. To take a wild Boar, one must know how to present the Boar-Spear to Advantage, just as one would do a Pike or a Halbert when two Bodies of Soldiers come to push of Pike. To shoot a Deer or Hare running, a Partridge or a Quale flying, one must be as good a Marks-man as the best Fusileer in the Army; besides, Hunting enures a Prince to endure Hunger, Thirst, Heat, Cold, Rain, Snow, and all the Incommodities of

the Air, without which, it is impossible to be a good Soldier.

I confess, Princes should endeavour to couple Moral and Martial Virtues together : I know Liberality is counted the proper Virtue of a Prince, it being much better for him to be Profuse than Covetous, Prodigality having a Resemblance of something more noble than Avarice, and really it is less odious : Nay, those that gain by it make it pass for a Virtue ; but perhaps it is more prejudicial to Posterity, and more dangerous than the other Extream : For tho' a King should give away his whole Kingdom, he would not satisfy all that ask : No, nor all that think they deserve much of him ; It is then more convenient to give with Reason, and never to draw so near the Bottom, but that the Prince may always have wherewith to gratify Persons of Merit ; and above all, the Prince should take special Care, that his Liberalities be exercised without oppressing his People, to avoid Murmuring, which is the ready way to produce Rebellion. But there is little need at this Time of making Laws against giving too much, Princes are not too free in this Age ; and there are not many that want an Overseer in
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this kind, especially in our *English* Court. It is certain, that Kings, by the Eminency of their Places, are highly obliged to Integrity, because the least Blemish in them grows up to a monstrous Deformity. They are the *Primum Mobile* upon which all other Orbs depend; and *Affladorus* says it were more credible that Nature should err, than for a Prince to frame a Commonwealth, different from the Constitution of his own Life; he being a Glass issuing forth Incentives to Imitation; and where that is wanting, the Government cannot long subsist. Was not *Rome* Warlike under *Romulus*, Religious under *Numa*, Continent under *Fabricius*, Dissolute under *Lucullus* and *Antony*, Idolatrous under *Julian*, immersed in *Arianism* under *Valens*? To shew that People are always moulded into the Temper of their Prince, and where that is not, the Government is short. And we find in Holy Writ, Judgment threatned to Princes, who have been a Snare instead of a Sanctuary to their Subjects: And St. *Augustin* calls them the worst of Homicides, in destroying the Souls of their Subjects; and therefore that King who understands his Duty to God, cannot be ignorant, how many Obligations of Vir-

tue are annexed to a Crown, since the Lives of his Subjects are shaded under his Protection ; and since a King mediates between God and his People, it is as necessary that he should adhere first to God, as he would have his People be faithful to him ; so that he must in the first Place consecrate himself, next his Kingdom, to the Service of his Creator ; and whoever does not this, he overturns both Divine and Humane Laws : Kings are not to be esteemed Happy for their Conquests, but by using their Power in the Advancement of God's Honour and Service. The Royal Dignity is not sufficiently great of it self to render him Happy that enjoys it, by the sole considering what he is ; for if a King be left alone without any Company, to think of himself at Leisure, he will find himself to be a Man full of Miseries, and that feels them as well as other common Persons ; and therefore carefully to avoid this, there never fail to be near the Persons of Kings a great many that continually watch to make Divertisements for Princes, and supply their Leisure Time with Pleasures and Pastimes, that none of their Time may be vacant ; which is to say, that Kings are encompassed round with Persons that
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are very careful Kings should not be alone to think of themselves, knowing very well that a King, as he is, he would be very Miserable if he should be left alone; and indeed, the chief thing that supports Men in great Employments is, that they are perpetually hindred from Thinking of themselves, for it is the Noise and Bustle that diverts us, and is most grateful; Men have a secret Instinct that intices them to seek Divertisements, which proceeds from the continual Sense of their Misery, and they feel another secret Instinct that remains from the Greatness of their first Nature, which makes them know that their Happiness consists only in Rest; and these two contrary Instincts flatter them, that the Satisfaction they expect will come, by opening the Door that will admit them to Rest, which is usually sought by struggling with some Opposition in vain: And therefore *Cyneas* the Philosopher said well to *Pyrrhus*, who promised he would enjoy his Pleasures with his Friends, when he had conquered a good Part of the World: But *Cyneas* told him, he would do better to advance his own Happiness by injoying that Rest presently, than to seek it by so many Troubles; but *Pyrrhus* could not be Happy, either
before

before or after Conquering a great Part of the World; and the sensual Life his Ministers advis'd him to was less able to content him, than the Agitation of so great Wars, and so many Voyages as he designed.

'Tis certain, Man hunts after Felicity in all his Actions; for all Men desire to be Happy, and whatever different Means they use, all tend to this End; it is the same Desire in both, that inclines one to go to War, and the other not to go; the Will doth never move one Step, but with regard to this Object of Felicity: It is a true and real Motive of all Men's Actions; nay, even of those that hang themselves: When People believe their Prince is Liberal, Valiant, and Prudent, they will more readily obey his Will and receive his Commands with Respect; but to gain the Reputation of being a Prudent Prince, he should be very careful that his Ministers and Servants be Friends to the publick Good, that they be Affable, Modest and Generous: The Prince must shew a constant Resolution to maintain his People in their ancient Splendour: That Adversity cast him not down, nor Prosperity make him Insolent; and to give a fairer Lustre to his Liberality, he

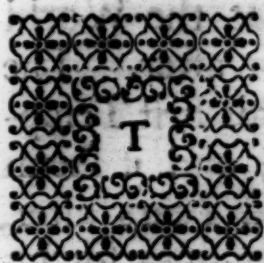
he should take Care that what he bestows do not arise out of the Oppression of any, and being such without drawing his Sword, or giving much to his Subjects, his Friends and Enemies too will esteem him Valiant, Liberal, and Prudent, and all of them fearing to offend him, will pay him the Duties of Subjects, Friends and Neighbours; and he need not doubt but God will dissipate his Enemies, and all the mutinous malicious Designs of his malicious Subjects and ambitious Neighbours.

We must know that Kings are considered in a double Capacity, that of Nature and that of Policy; the Politick Body never dies, and is never defective of Authority or Direction; the Acts of the Body Politick are not abated by the Natural Body's Access. The Body Politick is not disabled to govern by the Nonage of the Natural, by the 26 *lib. Assis. Placit.* 24. Justice Thorp's Judgment was, That the Gift of the King is not defeated by his Nonage: And in the *Assis. Title Droit Placit.* 24. in the Sixth Year of King *Edward* the Third, a Writ of Right was brought by the King of a Manor, as Heir to King *Richard* the Secoud, the Exceptions of Nonage against the King was not admitted;

mitted; for tho' the natural Body dies, the Politick never dies. So in the 4th of Queen *Elizabeth*, the Leases of the Dutchy of *Lancaster*, made by *Edward* the Sixth, were resolved by all the Judges to be good, tho' made in the King's Minority; and the Change of Religion made by *Edward* the Sixth in his Minority was good, tho' he had not Age to discern what he did, being then in the Hands of his Uncle the Protector; and if Catholicks should pretend to make void the Change of Religion made in that King's Time, because of his Minority, they would be laughed at by all the World, and their Pretence would be ridiculous.



Of M A N.



THE Transactions of this World are the most unpleasant Speculations that ever entertained my Mind; the whole Offspring of Nature moveth as at first, but only Man, who was design'd Master of the whole, runs a Course contrary to all Order, and the whole Progeny of *Adam* is obnoxious to his Original Guilt. We have innate Affections and Propensities to do Evil, since our first Mother's Converse with the Serpent, and the sad Effects of *Adam's* Fate are derived to all; but yet no Evil is in us, but the Cure is in our own Power; no poisonous Herb sprouts out, but in the same Field its Antidote is placed. It is therefore a Wonder that Men who know they have rational Souls, should only follow the Dictates of Sense, and for one Hour of Pleasure here, suffer an Eternity of Torments hereafter; for by embracing our heady Appetites, we have chang'd the whole Mass of our Nature, and have set our selves in a diametrical

trical Opposition to all that is called Good ; so that all our Actions are impertinent, and we level our Designs at a false End, and we wander in those Paths which will lead us to the Gates of Destruction.

The Enjoyment of what the World affords is that we only seek after. The Devil began with these in his first Temptation of *Eve* in Paradise ; and it seems he had not, four thousand Years after, found out three better Engines for his Turn than these ; for he used the very same in the Wilderness to our Saviour, *the promised Seed of the Woman*, that he had prevail'd with on *Eve* her self in Paradise, so long before. *Make these Stones Bread* ; there's the Lust of the Flesh. *He shews him all the Kingdoms of the World*, there's the Lust of the Eyes : *Cast thy self down from the Pinnacle, the Angels are thy Guard to bear thee up in their Hands* ; there' the Pride of Life. 'Tis true, the Devil can do no more but tempt us, his Power (however great) is limited, tho' we cannot easily set out the Bounds of it ; he has his Chains of Restraint, as well as Torment : It seems an Invasion of God's Prerogative, and a giving the Devil more than his Due, to allow him a Power of immediate and impressive In-

Injection into our Minds, without the Help of our own innate Corruptions; for 'tis by these we hold the Candle to him, and the Wedge too of the Temptation whilst he drives it; the Mud is still in the Bottom, he does but stir it up by shaking it, or drawing it forth by some outward Objects. There is no easier Way to out-reach a Man, than to out-end him. If once the Devil can get a Man to shoot with him in his own Bow, and make his Engines a Man's End, the Match is lost (as we use to say) in the very making.

Now if any Man will but seriously try, he shall find it more possible to with-hold his Affection from the Things of this World, than enjoy the Satisfaction of his Taste in it. *Socrates* had more true Joy in safely looking on all the Olympick Games, and thanking the Gods, that they had made him not to need the many Things they had made for others Pursuits, than *Alcibiades* in his hazardous obtaining them, which made *Socrates* cry out, *Quos diderunt dii quibus non indigeo*. 'Tis worth our Observation to consider the Toil that such Men take, who are in love with the Pleasures of this World, to eternize, if possible, their earthly Happiness by a
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Succession of Variety, and to take off the Weariness of one Pleasure by another, between the Oil and the Wine, as *Seneca* speaks, *Homines inter vinum & oleum occupati*; but all in vain; for after those few evaporated Minutes of Pleasure, the Body quietly fails the Mind, and the Mind the Desire, and the Desire the Satisfaction, and all the Man. There is indeed nothing more in all these Pleasures, besides bare Imagination and Expectation, which tho' they may draw out the Affections, do never satisfy them, nay, do the more dissatisfy and disappoint them, and Pleasure is but an Earnest laid down for Grief, if not for Ruin.

This Adventure hath no other Return, and if this be a Man's End, 'tis an End that quickly ends both it self and him: Many have come to their End by it, never any enjoy'd their End in it. *Alexander* was a greater Conqueror in overcoming his own Desire of seeing *Darius* his Wife and Daughters, than in subduing them, *Victor Magis Darii uxorem, non videndo quam Darium vincendo*.

In the next Place, we shall see some Men rake Riches together, as Children do Snow, rowling it up with no little
Pains

Pains and Hazards of their Health, into Heaps, and then fashioning them into Horses, Giants and Castles, and the next Shower washes them away, and leaves nothing in the Place but Dirt. It was well said of *Themistocles*, that great General, to a common Soldier, *Thou who art not Themistocles, take this Trash to thee*, meaning the Jewels and the rich *Persian* Spoils after a Victory.

Wealth certainly is one of the greatest Bankrupts in the World, and does not satisfy the Debt it promises; for a Man may as soon fill a Quart Pot with Virtue, as a rational Mind with Wealth; there must be a Proportion between the Ingredient and the Capacity. We call that Well, or Brain, empty, that hath not Water or Wit; tho' the first be full of Air, the other of Vapour, they are still empty of what should fill them, and so will the Heart of Man be, tho' never so full of Wealth, and much of it doth but let us see, how much more of it we want. The World is not so unequally dealt, as we talk, the Rich want a Stomach oftner than the Poor do Meat: If the Poor Man's Hunger and Labour be more, his Meat and Sleep are sweeter, and what Happinesses are these, that are as well not

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received as enjoyed, as well wanted as had; the Will would certainly never be satisfy'd, if it had all it desired, but one is presently satisfy'd if he renounces it; in complying with the Will we shall never be at quiet, not complying with it we shall always be at rest. *Solomon* and *Job* have best known the Happiness and Misery of Man, and have the best described it; one of them the happiest, and the other the most wretched of Men, the one knew the Vanity of all Pleasure, the other the Reality of all Evils, by Experience.

Pleasure, instead of satisfying, doth satiate, but Riches doth neither. For my own Part, my Humour does not much depend upon these Things. I have always fair and foul Weather within my self, good or ill Success in my Affairs does not much move me, I sometimes set my self against ill Fortune, and the Glory of overcoming it makes me master it with Pleasure; whereas at other Times I am very indifferent, and as it were dissatisfy'd, even with Prosperity, looking upon worldly Glory but as a Fancy: If we fish for it, we shall find it nothing, an Apparition, like the Night Mare in a Dream; you imagine it a Substance, you grasp at it,
you

you awake and it is nothing. Pleasure and Wealth will abide a Sense or two ; but this of Glory can neither be felt, seen, or understood ; besides the Slipperiness of it should make us undervalue it. (Let us remember the Consul *Bibulus* in his triumphant Chariot, by the Fall of a Tile-Stone from a House made a Sacrifice, before he could reach the Capitol, to offer up the Bulls and Garlands he had prepar'd ; or in that prodigious Favourite *Sejanus*, whom the same Day saw attended by the Senate, and torn in Pieces by the People ; nay, we need not go so far back) we need but think of the *De Wits* in *Holland*, who govern'd absolutely that Common-Wealth, and were so torn in Pieces by the People in the Morning, that there scarce remained e'er Night so much as a Mammeck of Flesh. It hath raised some, but it hath ruin'd more ; and those whom it hath most raised, it hath much ruin'd. *Paucos beavit sed & plures perdidit, & quos beavit perdidit*. Certainly if there be any thing glorious in this World, 'tis a Mind that contemns that Glory. *Diogenes* had more of it by his Contempt, than *Alexander* by his Command of it, when he commanded himself to be made a God.

Of GREATNESS of MIND.



WHEN *Leonidas* was to carry his 300 Men into the Streights of the *Thermopyle*, to put a Stop to *Xerxes's* huge Army : Come, *Fellow-Soldiers*, says he, *eat your Dinner here, as if you were to sup in another World* ; and they answered his Resolution. How plain was that Speech of *Cedilius* to his Men upon a desperate Action, *Soldiers*, says he, *'tis necessary for us to go, but not for us to return.* This brief and pertinent Harangue had in it a glorious Mixture both of Bravery and Prudence.

The Action of *Cæsar* upon taking *Pompey's* Cabinet at the Battle of *Pharsalia*, was Noble. It's probable that the Letters in it might have discover'd who were his Friends, and who his Enemies, and yet he burnt it, without so much as opening it ; esteeming it the noblest Way of pardoning, to keep himself ignorant

norant both of the Offender and of the Offence.

It was also a brave Presence of Mind in *Alexander*, who upon Advice in a Letter, that his Phylician *Philip* intended to poison him, took the Letter of Advice in one Hand, and the Cup in the other, delivering *Philip* the Letter to read, whilst he drank up the Poison. Resolution is the inexpugnable Defence of humane Weakness, and is usually attended with wonderful Providence.

Horatius Cocles offer'd his single Body to the whole Army of his Enemies, till the Bridge was broken down behind him, and then leap'd into the River with his Sword in his Hand, and came off safe to his Party.

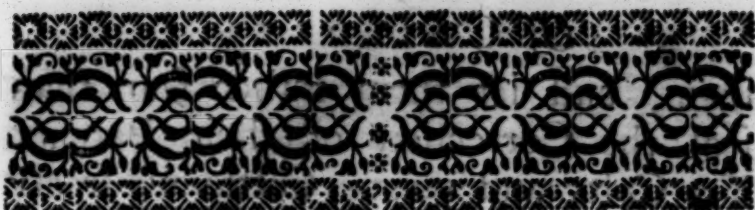
When *Epicurus* was ready to expire with an extream Torment of the Stone, *This*, says he, *is the last and blessed Day of my Life*. It is never said of the 300 *Fabii*, that they were overcome, but that they were slain; nor of *Regulus*, that he was vanquish'd by the *Carthaginians*, but that he was taken; and yet there is a great Difference in the same Action, done by a brave Person, and by a Stupid; as the Death of *Cato* was e-

steemed honourable, but that of *Brutus* shameful.

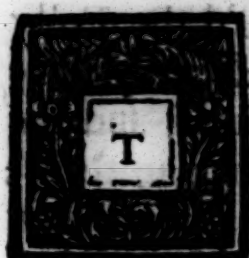
How wise and happy was *Saladine*, the great Conqueror of *Asia*, who triumph'd over himself, and in his victorious Return, caused a Shirt to be carry'd before him on the Point of a Spear, with this Proclamation, that after all his Glories he should carry nothing to the Grave but that poor Shirt. So *Adrianus*, a Roman Emperor, to qualify the excessive Joys of his high Fortune, celebrated his own Funeral, and caused his Coffin to be carry'd before him when he went a publick Cavalcade through *Rome*, which was a sacred Triumph, and a Heroick Insult over himself and Death.

When *Regulus* was unhappily taken Prisoner at the Siege of a Battle with the *Carthaginians*, they sent him back to the Senate of *Rome* to propose a Peace, and the Exchange of Prisoners; but he was of a contrary Sentiment, and dissuaded the Senate from harkening to his Proposal, chusing rather bravely to return to his Captivity, there to be crucify'd, than to be instrumental to the least Dishonour or Disadvantage to his Country,

Of



Of CHILDREN.



THE Making or Marring is in the first Age of *Children*; for then their Minds, by their Parents Skill, no less than their Bodies, by the Midwife's Hand, may with Ease be moulded into such a Fashion as will be durable in After-Ages. The Seeds of Virtue should be so early ingrafted into them, that they should not know whether Nature or Precepts were the Teachers of them. Many Parents do endeavour unseasonably to sow Wisdom in them, which does but corrupt their Natures, not yet ripe for such Instructions; they should rather let them enjoy that Freedom which Nature in Pity hath bestow'd on them, and not force them to endure the Punishment of human Cares before they have deserv'd them; let harmless Wantonness be freely allow'd

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them, and let them rather fear than feel the Correction of their Parents. To Colts and young Cattle we freely allow an uncontrolled Freedom, least their first Strength (which is then growing) should be hindred; and yet we are so blind in what we behold in other Creatures, we either neglect, or will not understand in our own Children, who after they have fulfill'd the Folly of their first Years, Age does by little and little change their Desires, and the Roots of Virtue will spring up in them; and therefore such as will call the raw Minds of Children to too hasty a Ripeness of Studies, are very Ignorant of the Strength which Nature bestow'd on that Age: Some Children indeed have early Wits; as *Papyrius's* Childhood that was judged worthy of the *Roman* Senate. The Humours of Children are very various; some seem to be made of a better Mould than others. There are often seen Prefages of future Abilities in Children; as in *Cyrus*, who first founded the *Persian* Monarchy, who was bred up and believed to be a Shepherd's Child, till after a more strict Inquiry, he was found to be the Grand-child of *Astyages*; and *Cato*, in his Infancy, was more than a Child; but this is very uncertain, and they

they are often deceiv'd, who by the Behaviour of Children will judge too hastily of their future Disposition ; for it must be some great Sign, and firmly constant above the Levity of that Age, which must be brought as an effectual Argument to judge of the Inclination of their future and flexible Years. Tho' some Children are more governable, and easier gain'd by gentle Usage, yet their Manners are generally according to their Education ; the Neglect of Discipline, and the Force of Example, makes the Difference, and causes Children to succeed or miscarry ; but those who are naturally most inclin'd to Ill are in most Danger ; and since Education is the chief Reason of their first Principles, great Care must be taken to set the Byass right at first, and that Virtue may be early instill'd into their Minds, which will make their Lives happy for the future, and then Custom will make it easy to them : And indeed, Children should be treated with great Wariness ; they should hear and see nothing that should be dangerous in the Imitation, and the Indiscretion of Parents is very often of ill Consequence in this Particular ; which puts me in mind of what *Montaign* says to this Purpose ; who being present whilst the Governante

was

was hearing his Daughter read, and there being an obscene Word, she forbade her the naming it; whereupon the Father was very angry with the Governante, and said, *She had done his Daughter much Hurt in taking Notice of that Word, which she should have let pass without any Observation.*

Childhood is certainly the principal Time for Improvement, whilst the Mind is at Liberty, the Memory strong, Pleasures unknown to them; and they are like white Paper, where you may write what you please; and we should never design Children to any Profession before their Capacities are known, and their Genius and Inclinations examin'd; for otherwise their Nature may be crossed, and to strive against the Stream is altogether in vain; and if Care were taken that the Inclinations of young People were suited to their Professions, we should see them improve much faster than they do; for Men must not endeavour to fly without Wings, and to undertake Business that is too hard for them: The Passions of young Men often carry them with full Speed, when they want the Bridle and not the Spur; and like a Ship without a Pilot, they often over-fet themselves, being launched with-
out

out Ballast, and wanting a Compass to steer by, they are soon under Water : And indeed, Youth without good Breeding is in a dangerous Condition, and soon lost, being subject to great Rashness; and therefore those that are young should be very careful of their Carriage, since we see oftentimes those that are very promising in their Youth, flag at the last, and fall short of Expectation.

Young Men, at their first Entrance into Man's Estate, the Heat of Blood breeds in them a wonderful Change, carries away their Mind with a Tide of inconsiderate Confidence and vain Security, they know not how to be provident for After-times, neither can they consider how obnoxious they are to the Ruins of Fortune.

The Office of Childhood is to Learn, and retain by a strong Memory, the Deeds and Speeches of their Ancestors; of Youth, to invent and speak Things altogether new; of middle Age, to moderate it self by Observation from both the former, for then our Bodies and Minds are exceedingly changed from what they were heretofore; and as we grow in Years, our Pleasures and Inclinations are not the same; even our Manners, and all our Desires, are much different,

ferent, and moulded as it were a-new. No Age of Man is more cunning than the middle Age, in dissembling Friendship, and governing their Affections. It can then wonder at it self, that it could so improvidently go astray, and endeavours to repair the Ruins of his younger Years, and renews with much Vigour the Errors of the same. Memory is ever greatest in Children, being then able to retain what they learn, and still safely store it up in the Closets of their Memory; but as Age increases it will decay, and therefore their Minds ought to be fill'd with profitable History whilst they are young; for Memory is like the Dew, which in hot Countries falls upon the Leaves of Holly, unless it be gather'd by break of Day, it vanishes at Sun Rising. Things of little Labour, and no Judgment, will easily be attain'd by Children, who are neither strong for Labour, nor ripe for Judgment.

Publick Ministers, when they have a Mind to prolong their Families in Honour, should always breed at least one of their Children in their Office under them. This the *French* do constantly practise, which is disused in *England*, to the great Prejudice of the Crown, where

where those great Places are most commonly sold, and commonly ignorant Men put into those great Employments, if they have but Money enough; believing great Places make great Men, which it always does, as to their Estates, but very seldom as to their interior Qualifications, which made King *James* the First say, *That he had a Secretary that could not write, and an Arch-Bishop who could not preach.*

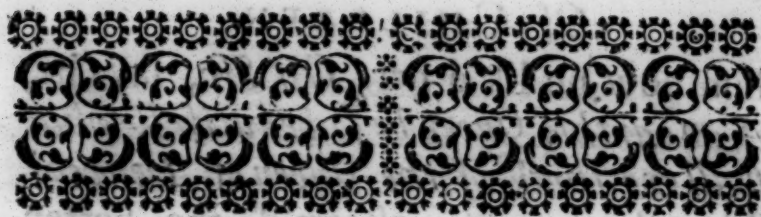
The *Chinenses* have that wholesome Piece of Policy, that the Son is always of the Father's Trade, and it is all the Learning he aims at, which makes them admirable Artisans; for besides the Dextrousness and Propensity of the Child, being lineally descended from so many of the same Trade, the Father's more careful to instruct him, and to discover to him all the Mystery of it; and this general Custom, or Law, keeps their Heads from running at random after Book Learning and other Vocations. The extravagant Custom of *England* herein is not to be commended, where all Men aspire to Book Learning; when there is not a simpler Animal, and a more superfluous Member of a State, than a meer Scholar, *telluris inutile pondus*. The *Goths* forbore to destroy the Libraries

Libraries of the *Greeks* and *Italians*, because Books shou'd still keep them soft and simple to warlike Affairs. It is reported, that *Groftthead*, Bishop of *Lincoln*, had a Brother a Husbandman, who seeing his Brother come to that great Station, came to him in Expectation of some great Preferment, or something very considerable; but the Bishop told him, that if he wanted Mony to mend his Plow or Cart, or to buy a new one; or if he wanted Tackling for his Horses, or any other Things belonging to his Husbandry, he should not want what was fitting, but he wished him to aim no higher, for a Husbandman he found him, and a Husbandman he would leave him; and to shew the Force of Education, and that the learnedst Men are not always the wisest, there goes a famous Story of *Thomas Aquinas* and Saint *Bonaventure*, being both invited to Dinner by the *French* King, on purpose to observe their Humours; being brought into the Room where the Table was cover'd and made ready, the first fell to eating of Bread as fast as he could, and at last breaking out of a brown Study, he cry'd out, *Conclusum est contra Manichæos*: The other fell gazing upon the Queen, and the King asking him

him how he lik'd her, *Oh Sir*, says he, *if an earthly Queen be so beautiful, what shall we think of the Queen of Heaven?* This latter was esteem'd the better Courtier. But from hence we may infer, That the learnedst Men are not always the civillest and best moral Men. And there is too great a Number of them, who lead a soft sedentary Life, feeding only their own Fancies upon the Publick, and therefore it were to be wished, that the *English* had not so general an Itching after Book Learning.

I well remember to have known a Person of Honour and great Quality in *England*, to have had three Sons by the same Lady, but of the most different Genius's and Contrariety of Humours, that have been ever seen; the eldest the most fantastical, proudest and foolishhest in all his Actions; the Second the most learned, sober, and yet bigotted in Devotion; the Third the most dissolute and drunken that could be seen, but yet very witty in Conversation; insomuch that there could not be found a more pregnant Instance to prove that human Souls come not *extraduce*, and by seminal Production from their Parents.

Of



Of LAW.



IT is the Effect of Law,
Quod Homo Homini Deus
non Lupus, That we do
Protect and not Devour
each other; and therefore
Aristotle well observes,
Quod optimum animal Homo lege fruens,
sed pessimum animal Homo lege devians,
Man is the best Creature with the Law,
but the worst without it: The End and
Aim for which Men enter into Society, is
not barely to live, which they may do
dispersed, but to live happily, answer-
able to the Dignity of Mankind, which
End they cannot accomplish without
Submission to the Laws, and living ac-
cording to the Prescriptions thereof,
Laws being the Instruments and Si-
news of all outward Blessings: It is an
Englishman's Happiness, That as he is
Born to inherit his Lands, so to inhe-
rit the Laws, which are our Birth-right,
and the best Inheritance we have, which
cannot be taken from us.

Reli-

Religion and Justice are the two Supporters of every Common-Wealth, they are the Pillars of all Government, without them the whole State, Civil and Ecclesiastical, will like a melted Vessel run into Confusion and Disorder. The Law of a Nation is the Soul of a Nation; 'tis the Rudder, by which the Vessel of the Common-Wealth is steer'd; 'tis the Yoke wherewith all are kept in Obedience; and that Common-Wealth, where Men, and not Laws govern, will be quickly like the Field of the Sluggard, all grown over with Thorns and Nettles; and therefore there had need be Weeders, that is, good Magistrates, to keep the Field of a Common-Wealth, from being overspread with Thorns and Nettles, that is, disorderly lewd Persons, and they had need be good Laws that must keep in such unruly Beasts, the Disturbers of the Peace. To what Purpose do Laws enjoin Punishments, if they are not put in Execution. For Laws must not be like Cobwebs, to catch only small Flies; and to be broken by great Ones; it were better not to make any, for this makes every particular Man's Offence the Sin of the Publick, *quis non vetat peccare cum potest, jubet*, to omit the Punishment

of an Offence under our Charge is to commit it. The due Observation of the Laws of God, and the careful Execution of the Laws of Men, make a Nation flourish. They are indeed the very Spirit and Sinews of every State, for all human Laws have their Dependance upon the Laws of God, who is the great Law-Giver, and the nearer our Copies draw to that Original, the better they are, and the more like to continue: *In pessimâ republicâ leges plurimæ.* And therefore the Curse of the Prophet hath been expounded by the Multitude of penal Laws, which are worse than Showers of Hail and Tempest upon the Cattle, for they fall upon Men; and where Religion and Laws are not preserved, we can't properly call them Common-Wealths, but *magna latrocinia*, great Confederacies of Thieves; if Religion be not upheld, if the Laws be not observed, if Vice goes unpunished, and Virtue unrewarded, if a due Respect be not given to Magistrates, who are the living Stamps of the supreme Authority, all our Happiness and Contentment in this Life and the next will be taken away, and the whole Frame of Government will fall to the Ground and dissolve. The Rulers

lers of the Earth belong unto God, and from hence we should learn our Duty of Honour, Reverence and Loyalty. They were the Sons of *Belial* that despised *Saul*. Without Governours or Government, one Man will be Bread for another; and we should be as the Fishes in the Sea, the Great would devour the Small. It is no particular Conceit, but a great Truth, that all Duties are by so much the better performed, by how much the Men are more religious from whose Abilities the same proceed. But if Magistrates, who are employed about the publick Administration of Justice, follow it only as a Trade for Gains sake, the Formalities of it will only then serve to smother Right, and what was necessarily ordained for the common Good, will thro' the Abuse of it be the Cause of common Misery. The Laws without Execution, is putting Arrows into a Quiver from whence they are not drawn out, this is to make the Magistrate an immoveable Statue, a *George* on Horse-Back, seeming always ready, but never strikes. The Law without Execution is a *Chimera*, which only serves to fright.

Justice and Fortune are painted blind, to shew us what the one should do, and what the other should not do; for the one gives without Respect; and the other is in no Respect to take; for none should execute the Office of Justice, but such whose Eyes are blind from respecting Persons, and whose Hands are closed from accepting Rewards. The *Thebans* painted their Judges and Magistrates without Hands, since when their Hands are over long, 'tis to be feared their Feet will become gouty, their Tongue ty'd, their Ears deafened, and their Eyes dimmed. It is a Shame and Reproach to us to see *Pagans* that have shewed greater Integrity and more Uncorruption and Affection to the Publick Good, than we do. *Civilians* say, the Magistrate is the living Law, and that his good Example should be a lively and perpetual Promulgation of that Law; for Example prevails much more than Precept, and reduces more under its Yoke, tho' naked, than the Law with all its Enforcements; and the Reason is obvious, for the Arms of Law only strike the Body, but the Shafts of Example strike into the Soul, and we see Men daily trust more to their Eyes than to their Ears, more to
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what they see than to what they hear, *Facilius est errare Naturam quam Principem dissimilem sui formare rempublicam.* We shall never see Princes frame an Age unlike themselves. Under *Romulus* Rome was warlike; under *Numa* religious; under the *Fabritii* continent; under the *Cato's* regular; under the *Lucullus's* and *Antonies* intemperate and dissolute; under *Julian* idolatrous; under *Valens Arrian*; and the Example of King *Jeroboam* caus'd all the People to commit Idolatry; whereas under the Reign of King *David*, *Ezekias*, and *Josias*, Religion and Piety were seen to flourish. For People generally are like Clay without Form in themselves, but easily wrought by the Potter's Hand, They behold most Affairs with the Eyes of their Magistrates, and suffer themselves easily to be directed by their Examples, and to dislike whatever they reject.

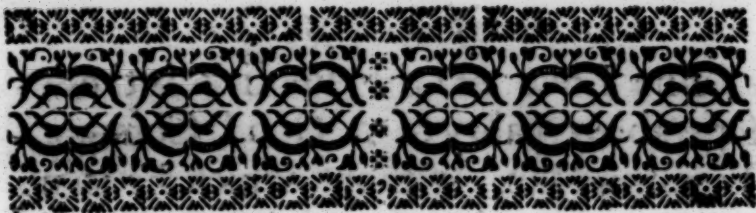
An ancient Father hath said, *He that is not a good Husband, cannot be a good Magistrate*, for he that rules not his Family well, cannot govern others, which is a rational Deduction; but he that is not an honest Man cannot be a good Magistrate; for he that will make Shipwrack of his own Reputation, will ne-

ver take Care of the Common-Wealth, The Justice every Man owes to himself, does oblige him first to regulate his own Affections and Passions, and then he will be more capable to render Justice to others, for both natural and divine Laws, do propose our selves for a Rule and Measure of what we owe to our Neighbours. Magistrates are to give good Examples to others, owing it themselves for ordering their own Lives, and they owe to it the Publick for Imitation. The just and good Man is a Rule and Measure of all others, since being what all Men ought to be, he shews what all Men ought to do. Integrity is so necessary in a Magistrate, that without it all other Qualities are but Instruments of particular Profit, and Publick Loss. All the *Grecian* Common-Wealths fell to Ruin for want of this. Gold breeds the Scurvy in some Mens Mouths, and Ambition breeds Imposthumes in some Mens Hearts. He must not look upon private Interest but the Publick, and submit his particular Affairs to the Interest of the whole: *Virtutis pretium est non posse pretio cepi*, her Reward is that she cannot be allured by Reward.

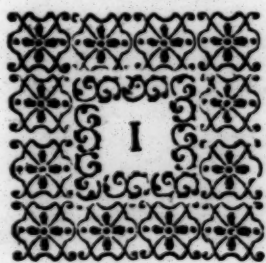
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The Love of the Publick is the inseparable Quality of a Good Commonwealths-Man, without which he is no more a Man but an Idol, as *David* said of the Idols of the *Gentiles*, *That have Eyes and see not, Ears and hear not.*





On OLD AGE.



I Hope it will not be thought unreasonable for an old Man, who can scarce remember his Climacterical Year, who spent his blooming Youth in the Service of the Crown, under King *Charles* the First, who in the Battle of *Edge-Hill*, fought the 23^d of *October*, 1642. receiv'd a dangerous Wound in his Head, still visible as a Mark of Loyalty to his Sovereign, and was soon after that Battle made a Captain of Horse, and from thence by degrees advanc'd to be a General Officer of Horse, and serv'd in that Quality during those Wars, and was engag'd in several Battles with various Successes, which ended with the Murther of one of the best of Kings, accompany'd with such barbarous Circumstances as cannot be parallel'd in any History, and fitter to be bury'd in Oblivion than remembered. I have thereupon thought it not improper to shew that the Strength of my Mind is still in being, which with God's Blessing

Blessing I hope to keep in Repair so long as my Body lasts, and have therefore presum'd in this following Discourse to shew some Advantages of Old Age, of which I am at present a living Testimony, even in this Year 1706.

The Life of Man is usually divided into Childhood, Youth, Man's Estate, and Old Age, all which Degrees we bring into that narrow Compass, whilst our Life consumes insensibly. Infancy is only a State of Hope, and most commonly supported by the indulgent Tenderness of Parents and Nurses. Youth, if well Educated, will soon blossom, and after yield Fruit. Man's Estate, like a Flame, well kindled and supply'd, will burn long, but Old Age does usually soon pass away; and if we do not watch, we lose our Opportunities; if we do not make haste we are left behind, our best Hours fly from us, the worst are to come; the purest Part of our Life runs first, and leaves only the Dregs at the Bottom, unless we take great Care, and then our Strength and Desires will fall off together, and our Years will sit easy upon us, when we're thus satisfy'd and compos'd; it smoothes our Passage
to

to the other World, and makes us slide into the Grave with a more gentle and insensible Motion. Indeed if we could observe the State of our Infancy, when we came first into the World, with the Progress of our Growth, and the Beginning of our Reason, it would certainly be a pleasant Retrospection, but divine Providence hath hid this from our Sight. At our Birth neither our Limbs nor Understanding were born at their full Growth, but we encrease by Degrees, and being Infants in our Bodies, we are not Men in our Souls: The first ten Years we may call an Animal Life, the Powers of Reason are then feeble in us, and we do but sleep that Time away, but afterwards the Advances of Age are very gradual; but yet his Gradation is so slow, that we cannot take much Notice of it, nor see it with our Eyes, and so we think all goes well, since we are not thrown so suddenly out of our Youth into our Manhood, and from that into Old Age, which would be much more sensible to us, and concerns us more: But we walk gently up Hill from our Youth to our middle State, and as gently down the Hill from our Manhood into Old Age, without perceiving the

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the Change we have made 'till we come at the Bottom: However we must needs be troubled, when we consider the greatest Part of Life is no better than a slow Consumption, and that at last we must fall into a State of Weakness, and be unacceptable both to others and to our selves: But we seldom think of this, because we seem to be the same Men in the Morning, as we were the Night before. Now he that would have his Health hold out to the last, and grow old with Advantage, must be regular in his Youth, and not live too fast: We must husband our Constitution, and not throw it away 'till we have done living, for our Vices destroy our Lives as well as our Fortunes; Intemperance antedates our Infirmities, and makes us die much sooner than we should; and tho' we have the World before us, we do not play the good Husband early enough; for 'tis too late to spare at the Bottom, when all is drawn out to the Lees. 'Tis true, we old Men cannot but be something concerned, to think that we grow less and less every Day, doing the same Things over again; and that we live only to nurse up our Decays, which is troublesome

blefome to us, especially fince there is nothing in this World to make us in love with it, or fond of it; none yet were ever fully pleas'd with it; for tho' it feems a *Fumo* in the Purfuit, 'tis but a Cloud in our Embraces; and therefore thofe who are forry to fee their Voyage fixed, are over-fond of their native Country, and hang about Life a little too meanly. Indeed when our Senfes droop, and all the Faculties of our Souls and Bodies decay apace, it is then high Time to bid adieu to the active Life, and not only to abandon the Vanities of this fading World, but the very Remembrance and Thoughts of them: Our Minds begin then to be naufeated with the Ideas of our paft Folly, which we falfly call'd Pleafure; and that Retrofpect is unpleafant, when we reflect upon a Life to be repented of. It is but Reafon when we approach near the Grave, when all our Senfes put us daily in Mind of our Mortality, that we fhould begin to recollect our felves, and think whereabouts we are, that we may not be fuppriz'd, and die lefs than our felves. It fhould be our Care before we grow old to live well, and then we may be fure to die well. It is the Duty

Duty of Life to prepare our selves for Death ; there is not one Hour we live, that does not mind us of our Mortality. Time runs on, the Period is certain, tho' it lyes in the dark, our Term is set, and none of us know how near it is, and therefore we should not wonder to have that befall us to Day, which might have happened to us any Minute since we were born. This Consideration should make us live as if every Minute were our last. But we fear Death, only because we know not where we shall go, and we never begin to reform 'till our old Age, after having spent our former Years in all Sorts of Vanity (which is better late than never) but 'tis a miserable Case, not to know the Value of a Treasure, 'till we are going to lose it. To begin our Frugality, when we are ready to turn Bankrupts: We should therefore begin early to do that which will always please, and young Men should carefully avoid throwing away their Time, as if they came into the World for no other End but to eat and sleep, or else to spend their Days in Wantonness and Folly, and to make Vice their Business. Thus we see in general,
that

that Age grows worſe upon the Progreſs, and hath no Relief to expect but the Grave; yet in ſome, Health, Vigour and Senſe, hold out to the laſt. Many of the Ancient Philoſophers and Romans were Examples of this Truth. Tully, who wrote excellently well *de Senectute*, was a lively Example hereof, being paſt Sixty when he wrote his *Philippicks*, in which his Rhetorick is more correct and moving than in his younger Orations. The Poetick Fire, which is uſually ſoonest extinct in Men, I have found by Experience in my ſelf, hath laſted much beyond that Period, of which I could give modern Proof, but I will leave that to my Son; only this I can with Truth affirm, that the Poems I have made ſince my Age of Seventy, have more of Force and Spirit, than thoſe I had written ſome Years before; but this is a particular Grace of God, it being very unuſual in the Generality, and very hard for Men to ſeem young when they're old, and much more ſtrange to be ſo; for tho' at ones Death, *Fuimus* may make a good Motto, yet in Life 'tis ſtark naught.

None

None can imagine how green and vigorous some Mens Minds are in old Age, having a perpetual Conflict with their Bodies, who were ill-match'd, unless to shew that an active Spirit may be lodg'd in a decay'd Body. It is certainly a particular Happiness to preserve the Force of the Mind in the Decay of the Body, to live to that Age, that neither cares for any Thing, nor stands in Need of any Thing; that tho' it can much longer, yet it will not still do the same Things over again, which it ought not to do, Age having put an End to his Desires; certainly there can be no gentler End, than thus to melt away in a kind of Dissolution.

Where Fire meets with Opposition and Matter to work upon, it is furious and rages, but when it finds no Fuel, as in old Age, it goes out quickly for want of Nourishment; nor is the Body the settled Habitation of the Soul, but a temporary Lodging, which we must leave whenever the Master of the House pleases. 'Tis true, every Man hath naturally a Love for his own Body, as poor People love even their own beggarly Cottages: They are
old

old Acquaintances, and loath to part; yet old Men, tho' they may somewhat indulge their Bodies, yet they make not themselves Slaves to them, nor care any more what becomes of their Carcasses, when dead, than a Man does for the shaving of his Beard under the Hand of a Barber. However Age it self is not without its Pleasures, if we knew rightly how to use them (the best Morfel being still reserved for the last) or almost it is equivalent to the enjoying of Pleasures, not to stand in need of them. Time indeed goes faster with old Men than young, because they reckon most upon it. There is hardly any Man so old but he may hope for one Day more yet, and the longest Life is but a Multiplication of Days, nay Hours and Moments, for the End of our Lives is set, and the first Breath we draw, is but the first Step to our last, the Course of all Things in this World being only a long Connection of Providential Appointments; and tho' there be great Variety in our Lives, yet all tend to the same Issue. Death old Men find most easy, because it is comply'd with without struggling,

strugling ; for by dying of old Age, a Man does no more than go to Bed when he is weary, it being childish to go out of the World as we came into it, groaning and crying. For these and many other Reasons, I cannot agree with them that seem to impute much Inconvenience to long Life, and that Length of Days does much rather impair than improve us ; for if we follow the Course of Nature and of Reason, old Age is a mighty Blessing, were it only in regard that it gives Time leave to vent and boil away the Unquietness and Turbulency that follow our Passions in our younger Years, and weans us gently from carnal Affections, and at last to drop with Ease and Willingness, like ripe Fruit from the Tree ; for when before the Season Fruit is pull'd off with violent Hands, or shaken down by rude and boisterous Winds, it hath an indigested raw Taste of the Wood, and hath an unpleasant Eagerness in its Juice, that makes it unfit for Use till Length of Time hath mellowed it ; so Souls that go out of their Bodies with Affection to those Objects they leave behind (which usually is as long as they can relish them) do retain still, as some think, even to
C c their

their Separation, a Byass and Languishing toward them. Besides, we must consider that old Age is not always a Burthen and Incumbrance, there are several peculiar Privileges annexed to this Part of Life, which will relieve us under the Decays of the Body; for the Imperfections of old Age are not so unavoidable as grey Hairs. The quiet Composure of an old Man's Mind, keeps him from wearing out so fast, it props up his Strength, and makes him live cheerfully to the last Moment; for easy Thoughts are excellent Opiates, which will not only mitigate old Men's Distemper, but make them almost to despise their Misery. Thus most Men take Care to live long, but few take Care to live well, which is in every Man's Power to do, but in no Man's Power to do the former.

We consume our Lives in providing the very Instruments of Life, so that we do not properly live but we are about to live, and we only propound to begin to live at our old Age, to which very few People arrive.

There are other very remarkable Advantages of old Age; for those who have had the longest Time to improve themselves

selves must needs be the wifest Men ; such have seen greater Variety of Events, have had more Opportunities of observing Humours and Interests : Their Judgments are more exact, they know more Things and those better than young Men, bringing their Thoughts to a second Test, for trying what they took upon Trust in their Youth. Old Men are usually free from violent Passions ; Matters of Moment are better consider'd by them ; whereas younger Persons are apt to judge amiss, their Prospect being too short ; and certainly Age is the Time in which the Mind is most discerning, and furnish'd with the best Materials for Wisdom : Those who have been longest in publick Employments, whose Performances have been more than ordinary, who have done most Service for their King and Country, deserve certainly a more particular Respect, and should be considered with more Regards, and should have the fairest Acknowledgments, and treated with the best Civility, like parting Friends that are ready to take leave of the World ; but, alas ! this seldom happens, for old Services are usually forgotten, especially in an Age where

young Men see Visions, and old Men Dream ; their former Actions and repeated good Services being no more taken Notice of, than if they had never been, tho' even Decency and Good-nature should at least make them be respected for them.

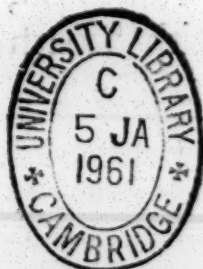
Thus the State of Mortals in this Life is very changeable ; if we are invited to cast Anchor a-while in some calm, serene Season, if we are permitted to Careen and Recruit our Weather-beaten Spirits, enjoying some short Interval of Rest and Ease, the Indulgence soon expires, and we are forced to hoist Sail with double Diligence, lest we suffer a Wreck, for we fly at Random in a Sea of perpetual Hazards and Difficulties ; and yet the Shortness of Life is the common Complaint of most People, who make it short either by doing ill, doing nothing, or doing Things besides their Business ; so that this large extent of Life will not perhaps amount to the Minority of Man ; so that it may be a long Being, perhaps a short Life ; for it is not the Number of Years that makes Death easy to us, but the Temper of the Mind ; he that would live a little longer this Day,
would

would be as loth to die a thousand Years hence : Go we must at last, no matter how soon : 'Tis the Work of the Almighty to make us live long, but 'tis our own Business to make a short Life sufficient, Life is to be measur'd by our Actions, not by Time. A Man may die old at Thirty, and young at Eighty, the one lives after Death, the other perished before he died. And therefore that noble General *Similis*, who lived to a great Age, and retired from Business to his Devotion Seven Years before his Death, would have only this Epitaph in Substance engrav'd upon his Tomb-stone : *Here lies Similis, of a very great Age, and yet lived only seven Years.*

Old Age is the Effect of Providence : How long I shall live is only in God's Power, but 'tis in my Power how well. How great a shame is it then to be laying new Foundations of Life at our last Gasps ? For an old Man, with one Foot in the Grave, to go to School again ? While we are young we may learn, because our Minds are then tractable, and our Bodies fit for Labour ; but when old Age comes on, we are commonly seiz'd with Sloath and afflicted with

with Diseases, and at last we leave the World as ignorant as we came into it; only we die worse than we were born, which is our own Fault. I wish with all my Soul that I had thought better and sooner of my End; but I must now make the more haste, and being in good Health, I must Spur on, like those that set out late upon a Journey: It is better to learn late, than not at all, altho' it be only to instruct me how I may leave the Stage of this World, with a perfect Resignation, with a true Sense of the Sins of my fore-passed Life, with a true Fear of God, and a sure Trust in his Mercy; and thus I shall sink with Ease into my Grave, and tho' I die old, I shall rise young in the other World, for that State is an eternal Spring, ever flourishing, and shall gently pass from one Extream to another.

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